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DODGE MACKNIGHT

Water Color Painter

BY

DESMOND FITZGERALD

Brookline, Mass.

PRIVATELY PRINTED

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FOREWORD

Having confidence in the ultimate success of Mr. Macknight's work, and the wide interest which it will awaken, the writer has decided to print privately the following notes of incidents in the artist's career, which have been collected from time to time, in order that they may not be entirely lost. They may perhaps prove useful in some more comprehensive work of the future.

THE AUTHOR

October 12, 1916

PREFACE

Art is the best expression of the civilization of the period in which it is produced. It is certainly influenced to a great degree by the life of the times, which accounts for the special beauty and perfection it assumes in different epochs of the world's history. The high standard of Greek sculpture, the charm of the primitives, the glories of the true Gothic, the depth of the Sung glazes, the plein-air landscapes of our own day, all are full of the individual civilizations of the peoples who produced them; all imitations can but feebly represent their real worth, because the influences which surrounded and nurtured them are lacking.

There has always been a crisis in art and we may add, with the utmost assurance, there always will be. In the strict sense of the term, there is no such thing as permanency, and in regard to the affairs of man, this is doubly true. Man himself is always changing, but there can be no change without revolutions, and the crises, which we believe never before occurred to the same degree as during the times in which we move, have always been a feature in the struggles in art. It was a crisis in art when the cave man first began to draw upon the rocks, and it was a crisis in art when Napoleon began to dictate the channels of its activities and the rewards for its efforts.

In a certain sense, however, crises in art were never so marked as in these feverish times in which we live. As the race advances, its steps undoubtedly become

more rapid; results which in the early history of man required centuries to mature now arrive and pass with greater speed. The forces of nature become chained to the uses of man and aid in the rapid transfer of thought and accomplishment between the races. This perhaps will account for some of the kaleidoscopic changes in the forms of art within the limits of our own experience. We inherited, almost at first hand, the grand achievements of the school of 1830 — when the romanticists threw their spell over landscape art — and it is only recently that the followers of the plein-air school succeeded in bringing a new attraction to the painter's art by their studies in the mysteries of color and sunlight. Now, we have a crisis in art with almost every revolution of our planet and Tachistes, Pointillistes, Post-Impressionistes, and Synthétistes give place in rapid succession to Nubians, Cubistes, and Futuristes. There is a characteristic, planted deeply in the fundamental essence of man, which has a large influence upon these successive developments: it is the tendency of human nature to reaction. When the pendulum swings to the right, there follows the swing, often more violent, in the opposite direction.

In the art of painting, it will perhaps suffice to turn our eyes for the sake of this inquiry to France, that great mother and home of the arts, because there nearly all of the reactions, calm or violent, reasonable or lacking in sanity, may first be detected. In that country we shall always be able to find, if we keep our eyes widely open, the first impulses which act upon the pendulum of art as it swings from side to side.

These first tendencies to motion are generally confined to a few advanced thinkers, but it is by no

means easy to recognize them in their early stages or to differentiate the really valuable from those bizarre and ephemeral moods which come and go and are lacking in true stability. Thus we have had in France quite recently a reaction from the bright and gay colors of the impressionists to the somber and sometimes almost disagreeable hues of the Nubians. With the Pointillistes and the Tachistes we need not linger, for their glories are largely merged in the general progress of events, however much the influences of their works may still be detected. Just now we have the Cubistes flaunting their banners in the *salons*, and for the very latest arrivals the Futuristes, strangely enough a movement proceeding not from the French, but from a little group of Italians exhibiting in the French Capital.

What matters it if we see in the crazy productions of these "Masters" only disjointed bodies flying through space, accompanied by accessories of sky-rockets, pin wheels and other puzzling objects whose mission cannot be determined! In these latest movements, unlike many which have preceded them, we find their advocates only too eager to throw overboard all the lessons of the past; in fact it seems impossible for the imagination, even when stimulated by those artificial aids to which, alas! mankind is sometimes addicted, to go farther. The Futuristes themselves acclaim with superb effrontery, "We are young, and our art is violently revolutionary." One may very well add — Yes! but may it not be sacrilege to call it art at all? The strange part of their claims is that there are already imitators, plagiarists, "lacking in real talent," and another strange fact is that they cannot understand the "stupidity" of men endowed with divine instincts,

who are willing to sit before nature by the hour, in order to absorb inspiration from her varying moods; and as to portraits, why! if you desire an actual image of your friend, there is photography which will fill all the specifications. Oh no! their mission is to paint vibrations, and, kind reader, if you desire your movements through space painted, in little bits to be put together as a puzzle in patchwork, small spots here and there, a touch of light in some obscure corner and a shadow far removed, so that you cannot, save by the grace of inspiration, guess at the connection, there is nothing to prevent you and your money from an immediate parting.

These little wooden images of a new faith urge us to combine against the "tyranny of the words 'harmony' and 'good taste,'" which heretofore have proved such safe guides for the old ship in her battles with the waves, and offer us in return "Divisionisme," apparently a new force with which we shall be enabled to demolish the works of Rembrandt, of Goya, and of Rodin, and, in fact, of all the great masters of past times, and erect for our new worship the most intangible images left upon our retinas after a rapid glance in a crowded street.*

The true Futuriste is the perfected product whose dreams are of conquests beyond the ken of ordinary comprehension, and if you cannot, after frequent turnings, identify his work, so much the worse for you, my friend, — Go to! purge the body of its brutal ignorance and tune your mind to celestial harmonies until the purified instincts of your psychological perspectives enable you to discern what we think "we see."

*"Que de fois sur la joue de la personne avec laquelle nous cautions n'avons nous pas vu le cheval qui passait très loin au bout de la rue!"

Manifeste des Peintres Futuristes.

If all this be art, then art is gone mad and we have come to the parting of the ways. Happily, with all our excitements, we still have our senses left, and we may turn from these performances of the ring, from these driveling actions of idiots, to the contemplation of true art, illuminated by the calm and serene light of reason.

Here we may well ask ourselves, What is true art? Is there any standard by which our wandering footsteps may be safely led? Has the history of the past given us any star to guide us in our way? If we but turn the page, we shall be gratified to find that the art of the old masters still shines with undiminished brilliancy. The inspired lessons which they daily drew from nature still reflect upon our course. All good painting since their day still remains for our inspiration, whether it comes from the sunny south or from the frozen north, whether it was fettered by conventional laws which limited its progress or whether it had burst its shackles and become warm and brilliant with the light that nature has given. All of these phases of art were necessary and useful portions of the great temple which she has raised. If we follow we shall be safe, even though we add another pillar to the structure. If we allow ourselves to stray into some side path, even though it be free from the toil of the other and easier for our climb, we shall fall by the wayside.

One of the fundamental laws of success in art, as in all other branches of human activity, is labor, patient and continued in the face of all obstacles, and here too we shall find no royal road to the summit. This labor must be guided by a study of nature, for amid all the varying fashions she only remains true as the needle to its pole. Nature only is infinite in ideas,

in composition, in effects; man only is finite, and when he relies upon his own imaginings his results will inevitably follow a path bordered only by repetitions of the commonplace.

The one word which has aided man throughout the whole history of his studies of art is nature. The successes of the school of 1830, as well as those of the *plein-airists* and the marvelous works of the Dutch and Spanish masters, were all founded on a devoted study of nature; only faithful work of this kind will endure.

It is true that no two persons see and appreciate the same effects in nature. Some organizations are peculiarly in sympathy with one view and some with another, but all have it in their power through serious study to teach some lessons which will abide. Through all the ages we have important and valuable examples of art which are scrupulously treasured by man. These may belong to one or to another school and to one or the other we may be particularly devoted through accident or study, but the fact still remains that solid reason stands back of it all and that good and abiding work may always be found to rest upon nature.

In this view there is great consolation; without it there is no sheet anchor to which the honest student of art may cling. Amid all the diversities of taste in the museums of the world, we shall find running through the different collections a golden thread which is common to them all, just as in the cordage of the British Navy a scarlet thread is ever present to show its origin. In one we find strength in Oriental art; in another fine examples of the Dutch school; in another of the classical epoch; in another of Russian, Scandinavian, Italian, or American Art.

In one we may wander with Corot or with Millet in their efforts to portray the beauties of landscape art or the poses of the human body; in another we may find rich examples of the English portraitists or of the founders of the open-air school; but as a rule we may hold up as a measure for our admiration the standard of truth to nature as the safest guide for judgment.

If this feeble attempt to formulate some of the lessons for leading us to decide that *this* art is good and will last, while *another* is bad and will perish, appeals to the reader, the writer will be more than satisfied. His own ability to appreciate and admire many of the most subtle effects in nature, he owes largely to those painters who have unlocked the door. Among these is one whom he has known for many years, whose works he admired from the first, and from whose continued and persistent efforts each year there have resulted constantly increasing and ripening powers to reveal some of the lessons which nature offers with a lavish hand.

This artist, W. Dodge Macknight, the subject of this appreciation, is a wonderful master of the art of water-color painting, he is a close student of nature, so close, in fact, that he never attempts to portray her except in her presence; for him the studio is simply a place to collect pictures and receive friends. By devoting the whole of his attention to transcribing what nature invents, he avoids wasting his energies in creating art, and he also avoids some of the pitfalls which beset those who rely upon their own inventions and whose works in consequence inevitably are but repetitions in idea, composition, and execution.

To the life and works of this great artist let us now turn our attention for a brief period.

DODGE MACKNIGHT

Water Color Painter

It was in the spring of 1888 that the writer first saw Macknight's water colors. The artist was painting in France at that time and sent over a number of his pictures to Messrs. Doll & Richards, who then had a gallery at No. 2 Park Street, Boston. The pictures attracted the writer at once, but it was not until the following year that he acquired one. It was painted at Fontvielle, in the South of France; it represents a yellowish road, the entrance to the village which occupies the middle distance, fading into the beautiful blue sky above. Every one said that it was too highly colored to look like nature, but such has been the influence of the impressionist school on the development of our sense of sight, during the past twenty years, that it now looks quite low in tone and altogether normal.

Since this event, the writer has not only acquired pictures from subsequent exhibitions, but has sought to add to his collection, examples of Macknight's art painted earlier in his career before his style was fully matured, so that he now possesses pictures painted in every year since 1883, when Macknight turned his thoughts seriously to the career of an artist.

As the deep admiration that the writer has felt and, in fact, expressed in numerous articles, is now shared by many excellent judges of art and Mr. Macknight's reputation is well established, the writer

has thought that it might not be amiss to leave to the public the benefit of the studies that he has been enabled to make owing to certain favorable opportunities which have occurred, and so, with the good wishes of friends, he has entered upon the pleasant work of following Mr. Macknight's history from his birth and tracing the gradual unfolding of his talents and the steady advances in his art.

It is perhaps almost needless to add that he believes Macknight to be blessed with a remarkable vision and that he has the power of expressing what he sees, two valuable attributes which, when united with power of application, result in works of what we call genius.

ANTECEDENTS

On the father's side, Macknight is descended from Scottish ancestors and on the mother's side, from New England antecedents. His father, who is now living with his son at Sandwich, is advanced in years, but hale and hearty, and he takes as much interest in passing events as many who are much younger. He was born in Philadelphia and moved to Providence, R. I., early in life, where he resided until his son established a home on Cape Cod. Mrs. Macknight was Miss Davenport of New Bedford.

BIRTH

The son, W. Dodge Macknight, was born in Providence, October 1st, 1860. He attended the public schools and was graduated from the High School in 1876. He soon afterwards passed the necessary examinations for admission to Brown University, but did not enter college. Macknight was always fond of study and learned easily, but his delight

in drawing and a strong natural bent in the direction of art lured to other paths than those leading to an academic career. While still a boy, he had painted the scenery for amateur theatricals and sometimes had occupied his evenings with painting for recreation; and so successfully, that his mind turned to carrying on this work on a larger scale for a profession.

BEGINS WORK

A search to find whether there was in Providence anyone engaged in this kind of work, resulted in finding a man at the opera house who was a professional scene painter and, when times were dull, a sign painter for business houses. To this man Macknight secured a letter of introduction which resulted finally in the employment of the boy as an apprentice, the agreement being that he should work for one year without salary, after which he might secure a moderate compensation. To this work he immediately bent his energies, and at the end of the year was rewarded with the munificent sum of one dollar per day and was soon doing his share of the business.

In 1877 Macknight had the misfortune to lose his mother. In 1878 friction ensued between his employer and the apprentice. The former found that his work was in a fair way to be eclipsed by his assistant and he concluded to carry on the business alone. In the worry that followed, Macknight was advised by his father to take a trip to New Bedford to enlarge the limits of his horizon, so he went to that city to visit an uncle. Here the young man continued his water color studies. He naturally chose that medium because the studies of scene

painters were then and still are made either in water color or in distemper. At the opera house in New Bedford, it was planned at this time to renew the scenery, and the professional scene painters were hoping to secure the work.

"Do you really think that you could do it?" said his uncle.

"Certainly," responded Macknight.

"Go ahead, then, and make a study for the drop curtain," said his uncle.

This was done and the sketch submitted to the Directors, the design was admired, but they hesitated to award the work to a boy with so little experience. All objections were, however, finally overcome and the old drop curtain which had disturbed New Bedford audiences for nearly half a century was relegated to the scrap heap. This curtain had depicted the temple of Vesta and one of its most objectionable features was a woman holding a basket upon her head so drawn as to make her figure appear as high as the highest turret of the temple. Macknight chose for his subject a wide yellow road, disappearing over a hillside. The Directors insisted that the artist should add some houses, but a compromise finally resulted in the addition of a distant spire. The rest of the theater scenery, and also scenery for "Uncle Tom's Cabin," was later awarded to Macknight.

There is no truer saying than "Birds of a feather flock together." In New Bedford were several persons artistically inclined, amateurs and professionals, and they formed a little society and occasionally went out into the country to paint. Among the pictures produced at this time by Macknight were two which were framed and hung in the window of the local gallery. On returning from a visit to

Martha's Vineyard, Macknight's uncle informed him that Mr. Charles Taber, an elderly Quaker who was engaged in publishing reproductions of art goods under the firm name of Taber Art Co. of New Bedford, had been to see him. When Macknight returned the visit, Mr. Taber said:

"I have seen your pictures and like them. Will you paint me one hundred?"

A bargain was made, the pictures delivered and the work resulted in his employment by the company. Macknight's duties consisted in directing the productions of a number of girls, who colored photographs, made small landscapes on satin, and similar work. The young artist would paint a landscape, the girls would copy it, and then Macknight would put on the finishing touches, after which these "art goods" were given to traveling agents to distribute, especially in the West. Another branch of the business was the touching up of negatives.

This work in New Bedford lasted for several years and would undoubtedly have continued for an indefinite period, had not a wider ambition entered the mind of the young artist.

Among Macknight's friends was an artist just returned from Paris who advised him to go across the water and take some real art instruction in an "atelier." This idea found a responsive place in Macknight's thoughts, but an important obstacle lay in the path. He was without the necessary means. During his short battle with life he had maintained himself in the fray, and not without some credit; but the balance in his savings was but a drop in the bucket and he certainly could not expect to earn much in Paris during the four years of study. For several years he had been rooming with an

organist, Mr. Allen W. Swan, who nobly came forward with an offer to finance the undertaking, which meant a payment of \$600 per year for four years. The nobility of the act may be appreciated when it is considered that the repayment of the money was, in the natural order of events, subject to many hazards; and, as a matter of fact, more than two decades passed before Macknight was able to pay the last installment of the obligation.

GOES TO PARIS

Up to this time, Macknight had practically done nothing from nature, save a few sketches and some small landscapes in oil. During the autumn of 1883 the young artist began his preparations for his departure to Paris, that Mecca of the art student. With a letter or two in his pocket, introductions to pupils in Bonnat's atelier, he sailed from New York the day after Christmas, and arrived in Paris one rainy night and with little or no knowledge of the French language. In the meantime, Bonnat had given up his instruction in the atelier and had been succeeded by F. Cormon, a conservative of conservatives in matters of art instruction, which consisted of two visits during the week to the school and a return visit by the students on Sunday mornings to the artist's studio to have their work criticized. Before gaining admission to the atelier, it was the custom to submit sketches to show the proficiency of the applicant; but our artist had no drawings, so Cormon said: "We will put him at work on a cast and see how he gets on." When the time came for inspection, the master said to the interpreter: "I like the way this man tries to work out the scheme; he may continue."

The winter was passed in working from the cast. Cormon was a distinguished draughtsman and he praised his new pupil's work saying: "This man has a very correct eye; he draws well and always will do so."

During his short experience in Paris, Macknight lived with French people and he gained such rapid proficiency in the language that he was soon acting as interpreter for the half-dozen English and American students who were in the Cormon atelier.

The summer of 1884 arrived and Macknight, with some others, went to the country around Chartres, and at last settled in Moret-sur-Loing, near Fontainebleau, where some work was done from nature and in the autumn a series of small water colors completed; these were of a grayish or brownish tone and were taken back to Paris. When Cormon saw them, he expressed much satisfaction and finally said: "Bravo! Macknight. These are fine. I must show them to my friend Busson, the best critic in landscape art that I know of."

Naturally, Macknight was much elated and he rose rapidly in the esteem of the other students. The pictures were finally sent to the United States, but no one seemed to take much interest in them. One, which was exhibited in the Salon of 1885, is now in the possession of the writer.

Mrs. Copley Green purchased one from a little exhibition by Doll & Richards. When Mr. Macknight, the elder, saw these pictures, he wrote to his son that they were not properly painted and enclosed pictures cut from a catalogue with some parental advice to "paint like that."

During the winter of 1884-5, Macknight one day began a drawing from a model outside of his

regular course but, as before, Cormon, when he saw the study, remarked: "You may continue." In the spring of 1885 our artist went to Montpezat in company with an atelier friend, a Dane from Copenhagen. Later the little party moved to Aubenas. There the persons who had advanced the money for the education of the Dane learned that he was painting in the country from nature and they protested that they had sent him to Paris to learn to draw; so, back to Paris he was obliged to go. Macknight later visited Arles and Fontvielle and in the latter village he remained and painted. Cholera threatened in the autumn and he was obliged to return to Moret, where many studies from nature were made. On the return to the atelier, Cormon did not continue his praises of Macknight's efforts with the same enthusiasm as formerly. The work was beginning to broaden and that was not in harmony with the teachings of the school.

LEAVES THE ATELIER

In February, 1886, Macknight left the atelier, never to return. There was no disagreement with Cormon, as has been publicly stated; on the contrary, student and master parted with the best of feeling and mutual regard. Macknight simply went at the call from nature and that is all there was to the story. He went alone to the Midi and finally settled at Cassis, where he remained during the summer, returning to Moret in the autumn. His friend Boch, from Belgium, and an Australian, Russell, joined him there. Russell was an ardent believer in the value of Macknight's work and he had previously taken over to England some of his water colors, but the style was so entirely different from that of the

English that the dealers would not take them. It was at Moret that Boch and Macknight made up their minds to go to Algeria for the winter, a step which undoubtedly influenced Macknight's whole life-work, and fixed in his mind that appreciation for the brilliant effects of sunlight which has characterized his subsequent efforts. Cormon was very kind in aiding the proposed plan; he took him to his friend Guillaumet, who gave him a letter to the Governor General of Algeria.

GOES TO ALGERIA

When the friends arrived in Algiers late in the year, they met some artists who advised them to go farther south, and pictured the attractions of Boghari. After a journey of two days by stage, they arrived at the little Arab settlement, but the weather was so cold that they were obliged to buy wood to keep warm and at last a snowstorm drove them farther south. Then followed five days of staging, fifteen hours per day, which brought them to Ghardaia, one of the five confederated cities of the M'Zab, inhabited by Mozabites. It is a French outpost in the desert and is a walled town. There the artists spent the winter, and there Macknight tried to solve the mysteries of the bright sunlight.

DEVELOPMENT OF STYLE

In Ghardaia a change came in Macknight's work. It at once became more brilliant and the colors purer. One of the most important of the M'Zab pictures is before the writer. It is much longer than the usual size. The dimensions are 17" x 29 $\frac{1}{4}$ ". For tone, the picture may be divided into three parts, light blue sky, white masonry houses, and salmon-colored

ground and walls. In the middle distance is the walled town with its oriental buildings and a low hill on the left, with a small group of sitting figures outside of the walls. On the right, nearly in the foreground, is a low white-domed refreshment house admirably modeled. At the door on the extreme right are two figures, while to the left of the door and in the immediate foreground stands a woman, and behind her, slightly to the left, a man. Nearly one-half of the picture is dominated by the yellowish ground and walls, blazing in the fierce sunlight. One feels the intense heat, the strange Arabian life, and the absence of vegetation. It is signed and dated 1887.

The consummation of Macknight's particular style, however, did not fully arrive until the following year.

In the spring of 1887 the artists returned to France. Macknight stopped at Cassis and Boch kept on to Paris. Cassis is near Marseilles and on the Mediterranean; there he remained during the summer, and painted a series of attractive landscapes, which formed a part of the 1888 exhibition in Boston. If these pictures are examined carefully, it will be noticed that the effects are obtained with broken color; the brown hues had taken their final departure and the key of painting raised. The writer owns several of the series; one of them, No. 3 of the 1888 exhibition, entitled: "Study of Trees, Cassis," is particularly attractive. The trees seem to be swinging in the wind and the general atmospheric effect is now grayish, but it was freely criticized at that time as being too bright in color to resemble nature.

In the autumn of 1887 Mr. Swan from New Bedford, Mr. Boch, and Macknight made a walking

excursion through the Ardèche, which is traversed by the Cévennes Mountains, and later visited Belgium. Macknight returned to Moret for the winter. The year following was destined to open upon the rapid development of his style. In the summer he settled at Fontvielle for the second time, and painted some village scenes which still exercise a strange fascination. The color was broken, that is to say, even the broad areas of color were traversed by patches of other color to break up or to make more vivid the impression of light. The artist had not yet arrived at the point where he could use pure color bright enough to produce the desired effect.

These Fontvielle pictures were, however, most charming. Some of them were quite small but painted so simply and broadly, and in such freedom from dirty color, as to convey the idea of being much larger than they really were. One of the most attractive of this series was No. 11, 1889 exhibition, "Street with Pines — Fontvielle." The foreground is an open space at the junction of several streets; on the right are some large trees which shelter a kind of shrine or public fountain; in the middle distance a crooked street winds away and several figures hug the sides near the buildings; the general tone is a bluish mauve; the wonderful blue sky is broken with lilac strokes; the plein-air effect is charming.

It was in Fontvielle that a curious incident happened to our artist. He was painting an interesting and picturesque old shrine in the public square when a storm interrupted the progress of the picture. He returned soon afterward to complete the study when, much to his surprise, the shrine had disappeared; not a trace remained on the ground to show

where it had once stood. A disagreement between the Church and municipal authorities had resulted in the removal of the ancient shrine. Two priests called on Macknight and asked to see his incomplete study, saying they were going to make an effort to rebuild the shrine but they lacked a plan and they thought they might get an idea of the relative position of the stones in the structure from the artist's work.

In the autumn of 1888 Macknight returned to Moret and there his real style was developed at once. The colors assumed a dazzling purity, and the audacity of execution and the brilliancy of the effects have never been surpassed. Macknight had come into his own; his style was born. It was at this time that the artist began the painting of that long series of pictures which culminated in those remarkable Mexican subjects which, with some wonderful snow effects from the White Mountains, were exhibited recently at the St. Botolph Club. It is interesting also to note that the sizes of almost all of his water colors painted since 1888 have been practically the same. They are made by cutting Whatman's Imperial sheets into two pieces, making about 15" x 22". It seems as if the painter had at last hit upon the technique suited to his visions and the most convenient size adapted to its expression.

It is perhaps impossible to solve the problem of the influences which mold the individual style of any great artist. During the formative period of Macknight's work, which may safely be stated as occurring between 1885-88, he certainly had abundant opportunity to see the onward march of the plein-air movement in France; but a careful study of his pictures painted during this time does not reveal any sudden adoption of any other painter's method.

Neither can his particularly individual style be traced to a conversion to outside influences. In 1886 his work began to broaden, but very gradually; in 1887, while in Algeria, it suddenly became more brilliant and it seems to have been the oases in the desert from which he derived his conception of the wonders of sunlight. During the summer, on his return to France, his water colors were all more or less bathed in violet color, which became still more apparent in the summer of 1888 at Fontvielle, when he made a great step forward in his recognition of the real colors in the shadows; but in the autumn of that year he seems to have recognized, as never before, the great differences in local color, and to have solved the problem of representing it in great purity and brilliancy. The artist himself, with whom the writer has conferred since the discovery of the exact sequence of the foregoing events, seems to have been unconscious of the changes taking place in his style and he is of the opinion that it was not due to the influence of any other painter. This evidence, when properly weighed, has brought the writer to the belief that Macknight's technique was a gradual evolution from within; and that while it probably would not have developed in the same way in an earlier period of the history of art, it was a purely personal expression, culminating in the autumn of 1888.

In the writer's collection are three pictures painted at this time, and they were all exhibited in the second Doll & Richards' exhibition of 1889; one, No. 23, "The Bridge of St. Mammès on the Seine," is a bold picture of a lattice iron bridge in a purple light; another, No. 26, "Sunny Morning," is a red-roofed barn, with intense blue shadows on yellowish-green

ground; the third, No. 12, "Boat Builder's Yard — Moret," represents a little group of concrete buildings with red tile roofs, boats, a donkey, and prominent lilac-hued trees in the foreground.

It was perhaps fortunate on the whole that Macknight's resources were so limited that he was enabled to husband all his powers for the great struggle to hold his head above the waters, and to express his ideas and appreciation of nature without any extraneous diversions. There was, during these early years, nothing to call him away from the pursuit of his ideals. The great mass of good work throughout the world is mainly produced in this way and ever will be. There must have been, at times, strong temptation to give up the fight and return to the business success of the preceding years, but happily the artist persisted in clinging to the narrow path which he had entered.

EXHIBITIONS

1888

Preceding the regular exhibitions, a small collection of Macknight's earliest work after he went to Paris was shown by Doll & Richards in Boston, as already related. In January, 1888, the above firm opened their regular gallery at 2 Park Street, Boston, to their first public exhibition of the artist's water colors. Since that time, seventeen other exhibitions have been held by the same firm.

There was a large attendance, many being attracted by curiosity to see the vivid portrayal of nature thus submitted to Bostonians for the first time.

There were thirty-five pictures, half of them quite small; ten had been painted in Africa, and the rest in

Moret-sur-Loing, Cassis, Montpezat, Aubenas, etc.; one of them had been exhibited in the Salon of 1887, another at the Versailles Exhibition of 1886, and a third at the Paris Exhibition of 1885.

The critics, as a whole, were very tolerant. The *Herald* simply stated that "one feels the differences of atmosphere, color, and architecture, from those to which we are accustomed, and the artist arouses our interest by the directness with which he has expressed his impression."

The *Transcript* stated: "The effect of the full sunlight, shining with intense and dazzling brilliancy upon white walls and dusty avenues without shade, producing an intolerable glare, and suggesting a severe heat, has not been painted often with more force, directness, and boldness. The wonder of the South and of the Orient, the secret of the profound predilection of artists for these regions, the admiration and despair of many a painter, is the light, with its magical depth and power, its marvelous contrasts, its rich and generous range of splendid color. All of Mr. Macknight's sketches prove that he has felt the fascination of this element in all its potency, and that he has been under the same spell which charmed Delacroix, Marilhot, Fromentin, Decamps, and Fortuny; an influence which awakes in every temperament susceptible to the highest beauty of color the most ardent ambition to excel in the direction which led the old Venetians to immortal fame. Merely as illustrations of North Africa and the country bordering on the Mediterranean, these brilliant impressions have a positive value of their own. The colors are pure and frank; the method highly original and varied according to the character of the subject."

The *Advertiser* stated: "He is a young man who but a few years ago struck out for himself, and his work here shows he has not mistaken his vocation."

The *Boston Journal* critic wrote: "After one has come from the study of gray and moist weather affected by most water-colorists, it is exhilarating to meet clear blue skies and lands cheerfully translated into bright hues . . . 'A Mountain Road' near Marseilles is a still, quiet scene of a dusty road leading by the side of brown cliffs to a distant valley between green hills. The sun pours down on the white road and the heat rests heavily upon the hills. 'On the Mediterranean Shore,' exhibited at Versailles in 1886, in which one looks beyond a branch of a tree out upon the blue sea with its green shore, is a delightful picture. In No. 24, the water glistens with admirable effect. A 'Study of Trees, Cassis,' can be appreciated by those who understand the difficulty of representing trees in motion. The thick boughs are bending to the breeze with fine motion."

It will be apparent from the foregoing that these first pictures, painted in his transition period, were well understood and not unfavorably received. Eight of the pictures were sold at quite moderate prices. It is an interesting fact that this is above the general average of pictures sold from succeeding exhibitions for many years. It is only quite recently that the number has increased, and at the same time, the prices have been materially advanced. The first pictures brought from fifty to one hundred and fifty dollars. When the expenses attending the sale and the commissions were subtracted, the sum remaining could not go very far towards supporting the artist for a year.

1889

The second exhibition was held at 2 Park Street, Boston, in March, 1889. There were two pastels: A, "Objects from the Soudan and the Touaregs (a race of Arabs in the Desert)"; B, "Edge of the Forest, Autumn;" and thirty water colors. There were a number of small pictures in the collection and several of still life. The pictures had been painted largely at Fontvielle in the summer of 1888 and at Moret in the autumn of that year, and already referred to as representing the final development of his style. They were very vivid, and considering that they were painted twenty-three years ago, before the work of the so-called impressionists had been fully accepted, it seems quite remarkable that they did not incite a riot. Yet with the exception of a few rabid critics, fair justice was given to the new art and its possibilities admitted.

The following extracts from the local papers are here inserted:

From the Boston Evening Transcript, Feb. 14, 1889.

* * * No more bitumen effects, no more scumbling and glazing for tone; pure color and plenty of it is the cry; even Daubigny and Rousseau are old-fashioned compared with us!

Is there any permanent good to art in this fashion? Undoubtedly. Shall we accept the new ideas unreservedly? Not by any means. Can a badly drawn and poorly composed picture be good? Of course it can. What is the main merit of the impressionists? Their color. Does their color always save them from failure? Not always. And are their failures amusing? They are; they are hideous and execrable, but their successes are glorious. The good to be accomplished by the movement is this — it causes a fresh stimulation to the perceptive faculties, awakens the spirit of inquiry, destroys reliance on traditional standards, and sends the artist forth

minus his preconceptions, to look at Nature instead of pictures, and to forget, if he can, that any one ever painted before him. * * * Mr. Macknight's work is superior in some of its qualities to that of the impressionists of French origin. He is a good draughtsman, and for brilliancy and delicacy of effect some of his village bits are extraordinary.

From the Boston Journal.

WORKS OF AN IMPRESSIONIST

* * * A superficial observer would not appreciate, in all probability, the violent contrasts of a vivid, cloudless blue sky with a glaring orange roof; but an artist, or an observer interested in watching the tendency in art, will realize the importance of this extreme example of the method of the modern impressionist. Having become accustomed to the dazzling brilliancy of the exhibition, one may reflect whether the artist could outdo nature even in his brightest tints. A full sunlight produces effects which even Turner failed to rival—much more, then, W. Dodge Macknight. Looking for the most enjoyable feature of the thirty water colors, one may notice the fine draughtsmanship of the artist, displayed particularly in his representation of the French wall towns. The stone walls and buildings have a decision and firmness of the material itself. All the elements of a French street are realized with extraordinary force and decision. One of these town views illustrates the unconventional style of the artist. The painting is entitled "A Windy Day." Instead of painting the customary swirl of cloud and the frenzied tossing of branches, the artist has pictured a uniform sky and a collection of stone dwellings behind a wall. The only visible sign of the wind is a blue-coated figure struggling against the blast outside of the wall; and yet the impression which the picture conveys is that of the town's being swept clean by a stiff gale. Another work of high rank, which does not show the crudity of color displayed in some of the pictures, is a charming snow scene, quite the gem of the collection. No. 4, the "Road to Montmajor," is a valuable example of the artist's work. It is evident that Mr. Macknight is working out with sincere determination the method hinted at last year in his first exhibition; but it is

to be questioned whether even a determined impressionist ought to inflict upon the public such extraordinary pastels as these two on exhibition.

From the Boston Daily Advertiser.

The water colors of the impressionist, Dodge Macknight, * * * find enthusiastic admirers, and last year found purchasers in several of the leading Boston artists who say that these daring little works, hung in their studios, exert upon them constantly a certain stimulating influence. These artists have been to see the present exhibit, admire the "dash and spirit" of the young artist more than ever, and lose no opportunity of commending his paintings to friends and acquaintances who have means to purchase them. That the artist is at present a struggler for fame, rich only with his convictions of abundant recognition in the future, is apparent simply from the setting of his studies. There are no rich frames. All are bordered uniformly with a plain inch-wide molding of wood. Each, owing nothing to its environment, stands strictly on its own merit.

From the Boston Post, March 25, 1889.

THE PECULIAR WATER COLORS AT DOLL & RICHARDS'

"The pioneer is always peculiar," said William M. Hunt. Mr. Dodge Macknight is a pioneer, and every visitor to the gallery of Doll & Richards will say at once that he is peculiar. He is in the advance guard of the water-colorists now working in Europe. He is destined soon to be a leader, to found a school. Already the artists who stand highest are most loud in their praises. Here is a man who is living for an idea. He is tremendously in earnest, and every movement of his brush is actuated by the most intense seriousness. He is going to show the world the meaning of the words color, light, space, distance. So fully is he possessed by what he has to do that he seeks involuntarily those regions where the light is so intense that it almost burns the eyes to look upon it. Tanguis gave him his keynote, but Southern France has lately been his field, and any one of his sketches made in the former place, when hung for a moment in the gallery, pales before the

intensity of his present color. A few examples of still life are in the exhibition, and very interesting they are. Their color is as rich and satisfying as that of fine old stained glass. Two or three of the studies of bright sunlight seem to be especial objects of criticism for their intense color. The two fire-red roofs, with orange foreground and perhaps purple water, are on the highest possible key. From these we are let down to something more within the comprehension of the ordinary eye and mind, like the "Boat Builders' Yard — Moret," where the strong and brilliant foreground leads to a delightful row of delicate gray trees. The "Moret Bridge" is a daring piece of work. The iron structure is bathed in that violet atmosphere which appeals strongly to the artist, whose drawing, by the way, is masterly. The "Road to Les Baux" easily catches the eye by its strong contrast of white sand and intense blue sky. Those who know the color of this particular locality say that it hardly reaches the burning brightness of the real scene. Fontvielle seems to have furnished a range of subjects well-suited to the artist's glowing sense of color. There are village street scenes, views from the tops of houses, sketches done in the different seasons — a great variety, all characteristic, all testifying to the loyalty of this strong disciple of color, light, and truth. When he paints a gray day, it is still a day with color. He seems not to have one morbid note in his keen, alert, vivifying mind. It is an exhibition which cannot be seen in a hurried visit. These pictures must be lived with. They are like all manifestations of genius — not easy to understand. Some of them may repel at first, nearly all end by becoming intensely fascinating. The artists are most enthusiastic over the collection.

HELEN M. KNOWLTON.

From the Boston Post.

NATURE AND ART

My dear Taverner:—Will you permit me to address a few words to you on the subject of Mr. Macknight's exhibition at Doll & Richards'? I have been a close student of Nature, here and abroad, for many years, but in my wildest dreams and imaginings I have never seen her so portrayed. It may

be that in some far away spot Nature exhibits herself in this strange motley, possibly in some planet lately brought to mortal ken by the Lick telescope; but nothing in heaven as described in Revelations, or on earth within the scope of my experience has ever approximated to these prismatic and astounding feats of color. When I read that our artists are most enthusiastic over the collection, I shudder lest I may possibly have gone through my life, thus far, with a color sense absolutely deadened and wholly inadequate to discover the hues and tones of natural scenery. If it is genius to paint such stage effects and to depict the beauties of nature with brushes dipped in brilliant purples, blues, yellows, and scarlets, I am grateful that our artists, as a body, are more moderate and less afflicted with the divine afflatus. Possibly I am all wrong; if so, I have plenty of sympathy among my brother artists and critical friends, and I am happy and content in my ignorance. The fact that Mr. Macknight terms himself an impressionist inclines one to accept Bonnat's definition that "it is a man who knows nothing seeking to make others believe he knows something." Somebody says these pictures must be "lived with." I think a week or two of such companionship would send me hopelessly insane to Somerville or else to the blind asylum, with my eyes burned out by color.

DR.

From the Boston Post.

MR. MACKNIGHT'S WATER COLORS

To the Editor of the Post:

Sir:—Will you allow me a few words in answer to the letter signed "Dr." in this morning's *Post*, containing an explosion of wrath directed against the water colors by Mr. Macknight, recently exhibited at Doll & Richards'. There were so many harmonious works in the collection which showed real talent and power of a high order, if not positive genius, that it seems almost a shame in so cultured a city as Boston the artist should receive such an outburst of sarcasm. This, however, has not been general, for there are many of the best artists, amateurs, and connoisseurs in our city who have united in the highest praise of Mr. Macknight's work.

Let those who still desire to cling to the old-fashioned ideas of landscape work do so, by all means, but they will inevitably soon find themselves very much behind if not left out entirely in the race. There are too many men of broad culture, refined tastes, and close observation, who know and appreciate the real advances which landscape art has made in the present century, to leave the success of the more recent progress in the treatment of light and atmosphere much longer in doubt.

Brownish and blackish pictures may still have their admirers, but they have probably had their day. While many of them have their own admirable qualities, depending always upon the individual powers of the artists, the present advanced school of landscape painters have wisely laid out a new course, in which the transcript appears to the initiated a thousand-fold more like nature than the attempts of former eras. Many of the pictures of the present day are full of a pulsating light, in which blues, violets, purples, and reds play a most prominent part. However, this is a question which it is almost useless to argue about. The appreciation of good work is advancing, though of course not as fast as all who really love art could wish. There is still the eye which seems only minute finish, although the values may be execrable and the canvas little better than a chromo.

I have never had the pleasure of meeting Mr. Macknight, but if he could have heard, as I have, the genuine praise of his work from the lips of men who know whereof they speak, I am sure he would be encouraged and gratified. Encouraged, not to pursue the phantom of mannerism, but to advance in the truthful portrayal of nature with her grand effects of light and shade and the purity of her colors. There were three or four pictures in the exhibition which, to at least some minds, seemed remarkably strong and fine. To the future, however, we must look for the final decision in these matters, but for one I believe heartily that the day is not far distant when the conventional way in which we have been accustomed to see nature portrayed will no longer hamper our judgments, when the good things of the impressionist school, viz.: light, values, and color, will be as readily admired as they are now faithfully treasured by those who have learned to love them.

DESMOND FITZGERALD.

Brookline, 8th April, 1889.

From the Boston Post.

NATURE AND ART AGAIN

My dear Taverner:—Will you permit me to address to you a reply to "Dr." in Monday's *Post*? Probably at the time the outraged man was penning his paragraph, I was riding in a Blue Hill Avenue car, back to the sunset and face to the east—where every object touched by the rays of the sun was illumined by a glow almost surpassing the Macknight pictures. "Even his orange roofs were true," was my mental exclamation. Some distant trees had exactly the tawny color which his trees had, and the sky was just as vividly blue as he has painted it in some of his pictures. Towards the horizon there was that vibrating vermilion under the blue which the same artist is teaching us to see even in our cold climate. The tile roofs of southern France were not here to be illumined, but every object built of brick and catching this last vivid ray of the sun was orange of almost a fiery quality. Now—about the purples. Had I been at the seashore I might have seen his famous "purple boat"; but, as it was, I did see marvelous blue and lavender shadows, which, in another place, might easily have become as purple as Antoine's ink or Mr. Macknight's much-talked-of boat. Now, all this color was not wholly in the sunlight. As the eye dropped from the glowing house-tops and other high objects and looked upon the cooler street views, it discovered most astonishing color. Here was a yellow wagon, there a red sign; here a yellow horse-blanket, there a man's ruddy face. The commonest object borrowed something of beauty and brilliancy from the glories above. Of such themes it used to be said, "If they were painted we should say 'such color is impossible.'" Now that they are painted, most people say just what "Dr." and his friends do. A few—they are a minority but they are in earnest—are glad to have had their eyes opened to new delights in nature, and they thank Mr. Macknight for daring to tell the truth.

We're made so that we love
First when we see them painted, things we have passed
Perhaps a hundred times, nor cared to see.

.

Art was given for that.
It lures us to help each other so,
Sending our minds out.

Boston, April 10.

H. M. K.

BELLE-ILE

While this excitement over the water colors was in progress in Boston, the artist was preparing for another journey. The winter of 1888-9 was passed in Moret as usual. An atelier friend, Russell, had built a house at Belle-Ile, on the Brittany coast, and had described the attractions of that island. In the spring Macknight followed and remained for several years amid much discouragement, pursuing his studies from nature. So far, he had secured a bare subsistence, not more than \$600 per year; but this income was destined to be materially reduced on account of the change of sentiment in Boston toward his work. Russell, however, liked the water colors and purchased several of them; in fact, in these early years, the largest part of our artist's encouragement came from his brother workers, and this is no uncommon result of good and original art; the artists are the first to understand and appreciate it.

In 1889 Macknight settled at Port Hallan, so that the Brittany pictures which appeared in the following exhibition in Boston were painted from that village as a center.

1890

The third exhibition of March, 1890, was composed of one charcoal drawing, "An Arlesian Girl," now owned in Greenfield, Mass., five pastels of Breton women, and twenty-four water colors, practically the first year's work on the island. In these pictures, Macknight was still pushing his color schemes, oblivious of the criticisms of the Philistines. The subjects were "Fishing," "Boating," or "Village scenes" connected with the lives of the sardine fishermen,

and they were all strongly colored. Belle-Ile is a large island, somewhat rolling, but nearly level, and bordered by enormous rocky cliffs, which in places are much broken where they jut into the sea. The soil is well cultivated; in fact, like the whole of France, it is a great farm, dotted at occasional intervals by clusters of houses which look like oases in the desert of grain. The fishing ports are extremely picturesque. At one end of the island, perched on an almost inaccessible rock, is Sarah Bernhardt's cottage, an old abandoned fort, which the divine Sarah secured and turned into a summer home. There, surrounded by the restless sea and the rugged boulders, the great actress is moderately safe from intrusion during the period of her "villégiature."

The following transcripts from the daily papers in Boston will give an idea of the opinions of the critics in regard to this exhibition.

From the Boston Evening Transcript, March 24, 1890.

* * * is the most interesting display yet made in Boston by this independent and audacious artist. His pictures are more complete, and have more character, balance, and maturity than those of a year ago. They are not less aggressive and brilliant in color, however, nor less original in manner. There is no use in refusing to see the merits of the impressionistic movement, of which Mr. Macknight is a part, for, after being duly shocked by his excessive and violent tones, which startle and amuse more than they gratify at first, we cannot fail, if we give the work enough respectful attention, to be struck by the success with which he reproduces the phenomena of sunlight, the vitality of his landscapes, the pure and unadulterated quality of his color, and the utter originality of his point of view. If he keeps on in this way he will make a great name for himself; such is our prediction. There is nothing stupid in his pictures, and he has eliminated from his palette all the colors which act in opposition to luminosity

and promote dullness. His color range is smaller, but richer than the usual one, for he knows how to make it go to its full length. It is conventional, too, like all art that is art, but within its conventions it is true to itself, and so far as it is that, it is true to nature. The pastels, which are very striking, manifest the artist's easy and well-trained draughtsmanship; the portrait of a smiling girl (2) is well poised, full of spirit, and piquant; the "Morbihan type" (4) is very clever, though the face is disagreeable; and the "Little Girl of Douarnenez" (3) is entirely charming and worthy of Manet. "Afternoon" (5) represents a sunny, green and blue, crazy-quilt pattern of a panoramic view of a valley, too chaotic as to form to be wholly acceptable, but almost grand in its suggestions. "An Olive Grove, South France" (6) is as bold in its generalizations of form as one of Corot's latest-period pictures of foliage: the leaves look like a fog. The charcoal drawing of "An Arlesian Girl" (1) is a very good sketch; *pas mal!* as Marie Bashkirtseff says. Of the twenty-four water colors which form the larger part of the collection, we prefer "The Beehives" (28), "Gorse in Bloom" (13), and, in spite of its exaggerations, "A Cabbage Field" (24), in all of which the reproduction of the effect of full sunlight is of an Oriental warmth, power, and brilliancy.

Sunday Morning Gazette, April 6, 1890.

The sensation of the week has been the exhibition of pastel and water-color drawings by Mr. W. Dodge Macknight. It seems hardly possible that educated men and women, with well-balanced minds, should take these pictures seriously. Much has been said and written about the impressionist school, and here we have startling proof of what this school is capable. In France, where there are so many really fine painters, it is almost impossible to create a stir in the art world, unless something new and original be attempted. The more startling a picture be in color or treatment, the more likely the artist is to rise above the heads of his contemporaries. A knowledge of this led, probably, to the rise of the school of impressionists. Painters like Mr. Macknight say they represent landscapes as they see them. If this be the case, they must be color-blind; for nature never produced

such rude, glaring effects as are seen in most of the pictures under discussion. It is said by Mr. Macknight's admirers that he never mixes his colors; this is nothing to his credit. Give a child a lot of paints and he too will daub unmixed yellows, reds, and blues on a canvas. This would hardly be considered a reason for praising the artistic knowledge of the child. Arsenic green trees and purple barns, glaring blue skies and orange straw, are all very vivid, but scarcely true to poor Dame Nature. Perhaps the worst specimens of Macknight's style were the pictures called "Gorse in Bloom," "Winter Sunlight" and "A Cabbage Field." These might have been intended to represent anything or nothing. "Winter Sunlight" might as well have been called "Summer Sunset," and "A Cabbage Field" was just as much like an unwholesome marsh. Nature, in her most brilliant moods, never sets the teeth on edge; while Mr. Macknight's pictures often do. It seems impossible that any artist should be found who would praise these eccentric daubs, and yet this has been the case. After all, painters are but human and many of them have an ambition to get on in the world: when they hear praise of such eccentric pictures and realize that a sensation has been made, they think perhaps it is better policy to say a few pleasant words of what they know to be bad nature, than to antagonize future patrons by telling the bald truth. Such an exhibition as this, is capable of doing great harm to Art; for the younger men who are striving for a place may be tempted to imitate the very faults that cause these pictures to be talked about. Even if there be great technical skill underneath crude masses of color, it is sure to be wasted; while the work of those impressionists who neither know how to draw nor to paint, had better be left to the imagination.

Z1F.

1891

The fourth Boston exhibition was held at 2 Park Street in March, 1891. Two pastels and twenty-eight water colors were shown. The former were figure, pieces and of the latter, four were "Sardine Boats," five were "Spring," six "Summer," eight

"Autumn," and five "Winter" landscapes. In 1890, when these pictures were for the most part painted, Macknight was living in Port Salio, Belle-Ile. In December he went to London, and in John S. Sargent's studio held an exhibition of the same pictures that were shown in Boston the following spring. This distinguished painter has been and still is an admirer of Macknight's work, and had generously offered his studio, although he himself, unfortunately, was leaving for Egypt. Sargent cleared his studio before leaving and notified his friends to go and see the pictures. Macknight remained in London for three weeks and then returned to Belle-Ile.

The following extracts from some of the Boston papers will show how the pictures were received by the critics; but there was another side which could be only understood by noting the remarks of many of the casual visitors to the gallery; to many of them the water colors were inexplicable. It was at this exhibition that some of the "Maize" pictures appeared. These represented the hanging of great masses of yellow grain upon the roofs of the cottages, where they could ripen in the sun. It was in connection with these beautiful water colors that the artist was informed by letter that, "if he kept on painting such preposterous pictures, he never would get anywhere."

From the Boston Post, Feb. 24, 1891.

It is worthy of note that the most saleable pictures in the market this season are of the impressionist type. The pictures of Claude Monet sell almost as fast as they can be obtained. Doll & Richards will soon show a collection of the unique water colors of W. Dodge Macknight, who has lately exhibited in London, in Sargent's studio.

From the Boston Evening Transcript, 1891.

NEITHER ART NOR NATURE

To the Editor of the Transcript:—The art correspondent of the *Herald*, in the Sunday issue of March 8th, calls Mr. Macknight an "impressionist of the impressionists."

If the use of pure prismatic colors in the rendering of nature's effects is impressionism, then Mr. Macknight, to use a slang phrase, "doesn't get there." His manner of using complementary colors side by side is brutal in the extreme; and not at all like nature's harmony of color. That there is in the shadow of any color something of its complementary, any careful student of nature will admit, but the eye is so constructed as to take the mass of color as a whole; and the effect on the brain is a pleasing harmony. Mr. Macknight dissects nature and shows the unlucky beholder nothing but the bare quivering blood-vessels and tissues. An unpleasant sight. It is turning nature wrong side out, and exhibiting her to the public and the gaze of the hundreds of art students who are expected to fall down and worship. This work in the exhibition at Messrs. Doll & Richards' gallery is a libel on art and nature both.

The critic says, "A dim, diffused light is what is needed to see them by at their best," and in this light "the beauty of the effect will be unspeakably heightened."

The writer happened in at the exhibition when just this happy light diffused the "garishness" to some extent, but he wished for a pair of blue-glass goggles to subdue the dreadful orange, lemon-yellow, and emerald-green grass. These colors, with purple so strong that it would blind the eyes of an eagle, are supposed to produce the effect of sunlight.

If violent colors like these produce the lovely light of the sun, as seen on harvest fields of grain, then why not light some of our dark streets with emerald-green, orange, and purple lights instead of the white electric light?

C. H. Davis or C. E. L. Green show more sunlight in one square inch of canvas than Macknight can in an acre of his glaring colors. Mr. Macknight is not honest in his interpretations of nature. He is not doing justice to himself or to the impressionists. A healthy imagination combined with an honest and earnest study of nature's effects could not produce results like these.

335 Columbus Avenue, Boston.

JOS. R. BROWN.

The following letter was written by the distinguished water color painter, Ross Turner:

From the Boston Evening Transcript, 1891.

A "GRIM NECESSITY"

To the Editor of the Transcript:—The critic of Mr. Macknight's pictures in the *Saturday Transcript* seemed to use as much color in his language as he attributed to the painter in his work. Would it not be wiser for that gentleman to have said that Mr. Macknight's studies and pictures, to him, did not possess certain color harmonies with which he was familiar? Nature is an unknown quantity — has infinite phases and moods. Could anyone assume to understand all of them?

The trouble is that too many people approach nature in a very cut-and-ried sort of a way, who see it, if they really see it at all, from a very commonplace point of view. To some, nature is a sort of reflex of a particular poet or painter; any phenomenon or unusual effect is often, without reason, compared to the nature of the individual imagination, rather than to the nature as known and seen by the artist.

Fortunately for the artist, he does not, as a rule, go to that class either for inspiration or advise. Mr. Macknight certainly does not —! If one sees in his work what is unusual and strange, it is none the less an impression of something he *sees* in nature. As to the sincerity of the artist, no one may question that. Mr. Macknight is evidently very much in earnest in what he is trying to do; it is the earnestness that results from a grim necessity. It is not right to say that a man is dishonest in his work until we are quite certain he is so; that he is judged and convicted by recognized authority. Let our judgment be deferred until we know more of art and nature than we now do.

ROSS TURNER.

Harcourt Studios.

From the Boston Evening Transcript, 1891.

NIGHTMARE LANDSCAPE

To the Editor of the Transcript:—A recent criticism in your paper alluded to the pictures by Mr. Macknight, I believe,

as being "neither nature nor art." Mr. Ross Turner, in your last night's issue, says in defense of Mr. Macknight that "if one sees in his work what is unusual and strange, it is none the less an impression of something he *sees* in nature." This is equivalent to saying that Mr. Macknight is above criticism, that he is justified in claiming immunity from the standard whereby all other artists are judged, namely, the standard of truth and beauty. If Mr. Macknight has some awful idiosyncrasy of vision which neither recognizes perspective, drawing, values, or color, it isn't his fault, but it is his misfortune. Mr. Ross Turner seems to recognize this in saying that these pictures are painted under a "grim necessity." We suppose this must refer to the awful necessity which the artist feels to get rid, at any price, of these chromatic nightmares when he feels them surging up in his tumultuous soul. He must feel much freer and happier when he gets them safely on paper. The "grim" part of it will be experienced by the purchasers when their "better selves" assert themselves and the still small voice gets a chance to be heard, which will be when this silly, ephemeral little epoch of impressionism, or *affectation* in art, has died its natural death.

R. J.

Concord, Mass., March 16.

And *per contra*, this:

Macknight's exhibition of impressionistic water colors at Doll & Richards' may be numbered among the very few collections that have sold well. The artist has fought a brave fight in his attack upon "banality," and is likely to come out conqueror, greatly to the surprise of the lovers of the old-time "molasses" school. We shall feel the good of the new movement as time goes on. Our best artists are learning how to use it to their real advantage.

1892

In February, 1892, the fifth Boston exhibition was opened. On the outside of the catalogue appeared this quotation from Walt Whitman:

"Only the kernel of every object nourishes.

"Where is he that will tear off the husks for you and me?"

"Where is he that undoes stratagems and envelopes for you and me?"

Of the thirty subjects, eleven were "By the Sea," three of them were "Boat" motives, and the rest rocks, cliffs, and caves; eight were "Garden and Flower" motives, and eleven "Landscape and Village" motives.

The pictures were painted from Cosquet, in Belle-Ile, where the artist resided in 1891; one of the garden and flower series was a pastel "Crysanthemums." This exhibition was destined to be the last held at Doll & Richards' until 1897, when they were resumed. There were a few exhibitions in the interim; one of them in New Orleans in 1893, another at the St. Botolph Club, Boston, in 1894, and a third at the studio of an artist friend in Boston. These will be noticed in due order.

Here is what the papers have to say:

From the Boston Evening Transcript, 1892.

* * * The works are of the most unmitigated order of impressionism, the fine flower of the Monet fad. Such a noisy and rollicking husking-bee as this was never heard of; the barn floor is fairly encumbered with stratagems and envelopes. Mr. Macknight does not flatter himself in the least. The poetical elegance and truth of his device are equaled by the appropriateness of its application to himself and his mission. Poor old Monet is nowhere, considered as a husker, alongside of Mr. Macknight.

* * * The use of the primary colors is carried to its farthest possibility of brilliancy, with results which are more stunning than modest. As decoration these pictures — or many of them — fulfill their purpose splendidly, not to say splendiferously; they would make a good frieze for a dark corridor; and the lithographers who make circus bills must

hide their diminished heads when they see what can be done by a man who gets right at the kernel of an object, and nourishes himself on unadulterated blue, green, yellow, and red.

Mr. Macknight's work includes some things this year which are rather more actual and more closely studied than any that he has previously put forth. He suggests a full blaze of sunlight very strongly in many of his landscapes, as for example "Cardinal Clover" (17), "Garden with Giroflées" (13), and "Going to Mass" (29). He does not compose, nor draw, nor execute after the manner of men, so well as he might; but his color has gained in force and resonance, and his work is piquant and amusing from its unbounded audacity and its grotesque mannerisms. As a lurid page in the history of that exceedingly curious and diverting phase of modern art which we call impressionism, this exhibition is not without a certain degree of interest.

"The Listener" in the Transcript.

Mr. Dodge Macknight's pictures seem to change from year to year, which is not strange, since this is a time of transition in art, and men are finding their level. His exhibition last year seemed more startling, more extreme, than that of the previous year. It seemed to the Listener that he was then borne along by some influence which mastered him, and which, to say the least, did not make pictures beautiful. But this year it is the painter who masters his colors, and not the colors who master the painter. Last year the Listener ventured the opinion that no one could be highly sensitive to color, and paint exactly as Mr. Macknight did. This year no one could accuse Mr. Macknight of lack of sensibility to color. Nothing could exceed the delicacy of his nuances in sea and sky tints. People who come to scoff, remain to pray, especially in looking at such pictures as the first "Boat Motive," the two "In My Garden," the "Cardinal Clover," "Ripe Grain," "Between the Roofs," and "A Windmill with Dead Fern." These pictures are brilliantly beautiful. Some people who are quite opposed to the artistic idea which they represent are compelled to admit this; these people are, in fact, gradually working up to the pictures.

Salem Gazette, Tuesday, March 1, 1892.

* * * There are people who do not like these pictures? Certainly. There are people who dislike dry champagne — not to mention those who are opposed to all wine on principle — and there is plenty of sweet champagne in the market. Then there is the popular demand that a picture shall tell a story. There is not the slightest objection to that — Mr. Gaugengigl's paintings always tell a story, and an interesting one, and are none the worse pictures for it. But isn't it rather severe to make this the criterion of excellence? Turn it round a bit: Mr. William Black writes excellent passages descriptive of Scotch scenery; supposing he were to omit the story and give his readers nothing but description?

Mr. Macknight, as his quotation hints, finds the interpretation of nature sufficient for him, without bringing in a literary interest to help him out. Poetry in the picture rather than in the catalogue, seems to be his idea. The paintings are in three general groups: "By the Sea," "Garden and Flower Motives," "Landscape and Village Motives." Here is one, for instance, that shows the yellow beach of a little cove, the water shoaling to a greenish blue, while the middle distance shows a blue that deepens to purple at the horizon. How far away is the horizon? If your eyes are unequal to focusing properly such an amount of color, you have only to take the minifying-glass. At once that horizon flies into the distance in a fashion that very nearly makes you gasp for breath, and the splotches and splashes of color — well, they

Shall dwindle, shall blend,

Shall change, shall become first a peace out of pain,

Then a light, then —

"Nobody ever saw such colors in nature, I know! Who is Dodge Macknight, anyway?" This, from some one just behind you. Don't look daggers at her — beg pardon, him — just hand over the glass and retire, it wasn't so long ago that *you* came out of Egypt!

* * * What is the secret of the charm of these pictures, which are so startling and so strange at first sight? Absolute directness of aim, which springs from singleness of purpose — that may explain it, in part. What the artist sees then and there, *that* he paints. One cannot have every-

thing. If you choose to paint the light and brilliancy of an effect that is momentarily shifting into kaleidoscopic combinations, you cannot stop to arrange your composition nor to hunt up picturesque and popular subjects. But is not such an effect as "Going to Mass" (29, not 30) shows, worth a larger sacrifice than the artist demands? Granted that the blue of the sky seems rather deep, where else can a picture be found so saturated with sunlight? And the other "Going to Mass" — the artist is so indifferent to titles that in several cases they are duplicated — the sky covers over one-half of the paper and is filled with masses of disorganized clouds. The greens and yellows are as brilliant as usual, and the figures strolling along the lighter yellow road are subordinate to the simple landscape; but it is only after a careful survey that the little house and the church-steeple start into sight upon the horizon and carry the eye into additional miles of perspective. Now it is open to anyone to declare that the details of a picture should be obvious at a glance. The answer, however, must be that if this house and this steeple asserted themselves at once, there would be an instant diminution of that wonderful perspective; and if we go to nature and common experience for our answer, — Who ever saw the distant details of a landscape without taking a little trouble? Not without effort comes the sense of the beautiful to the soul of man.

The artist's indifference to variety of subjects, as compared with variety of effects, is shown very strongly in Nos. 1, 2, and 3, all of which are bracketed as "Boat Motives," the latter one having "Storm Outside" added to its general title. In two of these, at least, the composition is very nearly identical, and the "Storm Outside" is indicated by the color and turbulency of the waves in the cove and the broken lines of surf upon the rocks; while a long narrow blur of purple against a whitish sky suggests the spume-drift without.

In "Late Afternoon at the Port," there is perhaps the only absolutely calm water in the exhibition, and the reflection of the bank, a glowing yellow in the late light, is something to be remembered. The composition in this picture is very nearly identical with that of number three.

Indeed, it is hopeless to suppose that any idea of this variety of effect can be conveyed to one who has not seen

these paintings. Blue, green, yellow, orange, purple — these might be adequate for the description of a dress or a bit of upholstery, but what possible idea can they give of these brilliant symphonies in light and color? Here is "A Headland — Stormy Weather." The water is a beryl-green, while the foam is almost soft in its effect, and seems to creep rather than dash upon the rocks that rise gradually into a cliff of brownish gold. It ought to be needless to add that this brilliancy is not — *cannot* — be obtained by omitting all shadows, neither is it obtained by forcing the shadows into unnatural darkness in order to obtain striking contrasts. "Cliffs" (No. 7, not 10) show shadows where points of rock project, but they are soft purple shadows, not mere inky blots. If anyone objects to such shadows as "unnatural," he is respectfully invited to walk across Boston Common, from Park Square to West Street, any sunny morning in winter, and observe the shadows on the high buildings on Beacon Hill. Just what color he may see we cannot say, but if he sees any *black* there, he would do well to test himself for color-blindness forthwith.

Gorgeous as are some of the garden and flower motives, it is hard to leave "By the Sea." The two pictures of a "Garden with Giroflées" are different alike in composition and effect. Number thirteen shows a greenish-yellow sky suffused with light, while the stuccoed end of a building stands out against it, light purple in tint, and the *giroflées* give a vivid red to the foreground.

In number fourteen, the grass in the foreground is rather bluer than usual, the rail fence is purple, and once again the most noticeable thing is the way in which a little half-inch streak at the horizon suggests miles of distance when you look at it through the minifying-glass.

"Cardinal Clover" has a sky whose aerial perspective is something to study. There is blue sky overhead, but lower down the cumulous clouds carry the eye farther and farther into space, while the clouds near the horizon — mere curlicues of white in themselves — suggest rather than complete the lengthened perspective. The grass in the middle distance is a good illustration of Mr. Macknight's purity as well as brilliancy of color; indeed, it would be impossible, probably, to find one half-inch of muddiness in any of these pictures. This artist

is emphatically a *painter*, and he depends upon the purity, graduation, and juxtaposition of colors, rather than on any formal linear drawing, for his distances.

Nor is the color always deep — the "Apple Tree in Bloom" is a bouquet of light pink shading into purple at its edge, and in the "Garden with Pear Tree" the purple roofs and almost brick-red ground are relieved by a light sky and a tree of the lightest tints of green.

One thing, at least, is reasonably certain — no picture painted in the usual color-scale could bear comparison with these paintings. Just for the experiment, a picture by a popular artist — it wouldn't be fair to give his name — was placed for a moment or two against one of the gallery walls. It was a winter scene, but not only what little color there was in it seemed to die out into ashes, but the perspective of the Macknight paintings were — all slang apart — pretty much "out of sight" in comparison.

Whether other artists will ever carry this brilliancy of color into their paintings may be doubted; but surely its effect must be that of brightening the accepted scale of color. "I wish I had one of these pictures before me all the time," said one generous artist, "it would keep me up to my work!"

And if, here and there, there is a painting like "A Windmill with Dead Fern," that will not "come right" for our Philistine eyes, what of it? Does anyone suppose that the true artist is ever satiated with his measure of success?

"That low man seeks a little thing to do,
Sees it and does it;
This high man, with a great thing to pursue,
Dies ere he knows it."

Let us hope that that day is far distant for Mr. Macknight. Long life to him, and success to him, and may he realize for all of us our Castles in Spain!

ARTHUR CHAMBERLAIN.

Transcript, March 12, 1892.

AN IMPRESSIONIST INTERPRETED

It is a pity to write of an exhibition in the past tense, and yet a tardy word may be better than none. Mr. Macknight's

pictures, just shown at Doll & Richards', are the work of a man thoroughly in earnest, and many of them proclaim their painter a master. We all remember how the first sight of a collection of the works of Monet impressed us. To unaccustomed eyes his canvases seemed full of awkward lines, the masses often lacking in true value. Some of his skies "came forward" to our untutored vision. To give the eyes needed freshness, we sat down for a moment to read the catalogue, possibly to chat with a friend on outside topics. In an absent-minded way we looked at one of the pictures. What a transformation! It leaped at once into reality. With awakened vision we glanced from one to another, and their full meaning was interpreted.

So with the work of Dodge Macknight. We enter the gallery on a cloudy morning, our eyes full of the gray of the Common, or the subdued tints of the Park Street houses. We have not even carried the colors from the florists' windows on Tremont Street. What a yellow field and what a blue sky! But it's rollicking, and — it's true! What a blaze of the cardinal clover of France! But it's a casket of rich-hued gems. What an immense wall of rock there! But it's a cliff, and what tremendous character it has! See that picture of a "Storm Outside," all the boats huddled upon a beach at the foot of a cliff, and the water angry and sullen with a fierce undercurrent that forebodes ill. Other boat "motives," how surpassingly clever they are! So this artist "doesn't draw!" Well, well! Here's a donkey-cart and figures in the road, not standing stock-still, but flying along before the wind — even the donkey. If these figures had been properly "drawn" they would have stood as if posing. There's a windmill, with a long stretch of blasted ferns in the fore and middle grounds. It's a stormy sky, and that windmill is turning to the great detriment of its — "drawing."

There are some exquisite skies; we never saw better on anybody's canvas or paper; some garden effects! Ah! but they are novel, with all the piquancy and spirit of French gardens. There is one stretch of sea country, like our own Narragansett shore, a narrow blue ribbon of ocean very far away, a haystack just this side — not to be excelled by any painter at any time, and then we come nearer to fenced-in enclosures where the riotous wild bloom of France struggles

to get through the bars, and the bars themselves are swathed with that wondrous violet which Macknight, more than any-one, has insisted upon showing us in nature. It is not always there. Sometimes it holds high festival, and again you may seek and not find.

To fully comprehend this artist's pictures, one must know something of Northern France. In Beaconsfield street we decorate our house-fronts with wisteria; Morbihan sees fit to hang up its golden maize. We are not given to purple roofs and arsenic-green shutters, but a white house thus decorated is quite possible within thirty miles of Boston, in the direction of Cape Ann.

In the French studios there is one word not often heard in this country, a word almost untranslatable, *banal*. Whatever is ordinary, mediocre, common-place, comes under this word. Macknight says, "Come what may, I will not paint the *banal*!" And so his compositions are — what they are.

Oh! that diminishing-glass in the gallery! Through it these wildly-colored pictures become perfect transcripts of nature! Is not that miraculous?

HELEN M. KNOWLTON.

Harcourt Studios, March 10.

Transcript, March 12, 1892.

MACKNIGHT—JUSTICE

To the Editor of the Transcript:—For the fourth time we have had an exhibition of the work of Mr. Dodge Macknight, and for the fourth time the press as a body, through its critics, has seen fit to run down and decry his work.

To those who think seriously over matters relating to art, it is a subject of keen regret that there is not found in art criticism the same evidence of knowledge and ability that we look for and expect in the criticism of literature and music. We do not expect our musical critics to reflect the impressions of the masses and their views, but the balanced judgment of the minority, who understand music and know of that they speak. We have a right to expect the same in our art critics. Our papers should certainly feel that the field of art criticism is an important one, and, for their own reputation, should be ably filled.

One of our morning papers evidently values so little its own dicta as to contradict one day, its judgment of a few days previous; first give commendation, and then hold up to ridicule the same man and the same work. This might be admissible in *Life* or *Puck*, but in such a connection is neither dignified on the part of the paper, nor just to the artist.

The case in question refers to a man who, from poor beginnings and unfavorable surroundings, is working out for himself a problem — is reaching for a new expression of truth, and is evidently earnest and faithful in his endeavor. That he should have already attained his object we should neither expect nor wish. Of whom can it be said that he has fulfilled his ideal?

We do not therefore condemn an effort full of promise and already crowned with much success. Macknight has done in water color what no one has before thought possible, he has put atmosphere on his paper — he has understood and rendered with the simple medium of water color the values which to a painter are all-important — he has caught the fleeting sunshine, the glow of heat, the shimmer of falling rain, and for this success he should have due consideration. At the hands of his brother artists he has received the recognition which undoubtedly he will in time receive from the public, and then, and not till then, may we expect to hear him spoken well of by the critics. There is not an artist of standing in Boston but sees in Macknight the true stamp of ability, and however differently he may himself see Nature and render what he sees, appreciates and acknowledges this power.

It is certainly no mean indorsement which one of our foremost painters, John S. Sargent, gave to Macknight last year* in offering him his London studio for an exhibition. Such men do not grant favors gratuitously and without thought.

It is mortifying to have the opinion of our best judges reversed by our press; it is doubly hard for the faithful student to feel that his work is neither appreciated nor understood, that the bad points are magnified and the good entirely ignored. In justice to Macknight, in justice to Art, let us have criticisms worthy of the man.

R. CLIPSTON STURGIS.

* Two years since.

March 19, 1892.

VOL-AU-VENT

[For the Saturday Evening Gazette.]

CVX

Teach me, oh Dodge Macknight,
 To know and worship thee;
 To feel that black is white;
 To see what I don't see.

Teach me, oh Dodge Macknight,
 To know which end is which;
 To view thy horrors right,
 To make thy colors hitch.

Fain would I, Dodge Macknight,
 Yearn with my fellow-men
 O'er thee with all my might,
 If I knew how and when.

Then teach me, Dodge Macknight,
 To know and worship thee;
 To feel that black is white;
 To see what I don't see.

Transcript, 1892.

ART CRITICISM IN THE PRESS

To the Editor of the Transcript:—A communication from Mr. R. Clingstone Splurges, in last Saturday's *Transcript*, severely rebukes the art critics of Boston who have failed to appreciate the beauties of Mr. W. Knox Delight's water colors. The authoritative tone of Mr. Splurges's remarks is well calculated to convince all those who know nothing whatever about the question that he is a modern Daniel come to judgment. He and his friends, "those who think seriously over matters relating to art," regret keenly the want of knowledge and ability in the art criticism of the day. We all know how

idiotic the critics seem when they do not agree with us; and it happens that with respect to Mr. W. Knox Delight's water colors "the opinion of the best judges" (including Mr. Splurges himself) has been "reversed by our press." This is a very sad state of affairs, and it is not to be wondered at that Mr. Splurges, in a fine burst of indignation, demands some "criticism worthy of the name." Incidentally he himself furnishes a brilliant sample of the article. He says that Mr. Delight "has done in water color what no one has before thought possible; he has put atmosphere on his paper." If Mr. Splurges had not told us this, we ignorant art critics might have gone on thinking that this miracle had not only been thought possible by others, but had actually been done before (by such water-color painters, for instance, as J. M. W. Turner, David Cox, J. McNeil Whistler, Mariano Fortuny, John LaFarge, and Winslow Homer, to mention a few of the many). So you see, Mr. Editor, how necessary it is, every little while, for us to have someone who "knows it all" come along and teach us our business. You may be sure that we are humiliated by having our deficiencies thus exposed in a public manner, and that we are deeply grateful to Mr. R. Clingstone Splurges for his kindness in telling us how to write art criticism worthy of the name. I am, most respectfully, your obedient servant,

ONE OF THE CRITICS.

To the Editor of the Transcript:—Mr. Sturgis, in his letter published in last Saturday's *Transcript*, condemns the newspaper art critics for their comments on Mr. Macknight's pictures. He properly states that competent critics would reflect the balanced judgment of those who understand art and know of what they speak. He goes too far, however, when he says that these critics should not reflect the impressions of the masses and their views, because sometimes the masses may, after all, be right, and may agree with the balanced judgment of those who know of what they speak, while the opposing minority may be wrong.

When a man starts out, as Mr. Macknight has done, in a new direction in art — one that is opposed to the methods and traditions of generations — he must expect some adverse criticism. When he publicly exhibits his productions he

invites it. He may be sure that he will get it, too, and that he and his friends must be prepared to take it without winning. Mr. Macknight's departure is one of the kind that is justified only by absolute success, and few, I think, will contend that he has achieved that so far. There is certainly some merit in several of these pictures, and it is not unlikely that Mr. Sargent saw more than many of us do; but that does not by any means place them beyond the pale of adverse criticism, and for every artist of standing that will praise them as a whole, it will not be difficult to find another who will condemn them.

On the other hand, it is possible that Mr. Macknight has really discovered the right road, and that he is the favored one who is to initiate the American School of Art that our Western friends sometimes speak of; but at present his work is tentative only, like the free-hand sketch of an architect or the notes of a clergyman, and his object in exhibiting it from time to time is probably more to feel the pulse of the public than to elicit admiration. By all means let us give the artist time and see what the development of this new method may be; but meanwhile, critics are quite justified in speaking of the exhibited work as they find it, irrespective of that to which in the distant future it may lead.

W. F. CORNE.

Cambridge, March 17, 1892.

Commonwealth, 1892

IMPRESSIONISM—A PROTEST

To the Editor of the Commonwealth:—The interest that has been excited by impressionism in art warrants the quoting of a few passages from a letter received by me from one of the most faithful representatives of that school—if, indeed, he is not founding a school of his own. I do not give his name, as he did not write for publication. Perhaps I do not need to give it.

"I intended," he says in his letter, "to write to you ere this, but have been rather discouraged by the financial result of my exhibition, which has upset all my plans . . . I am getting very tired of the criminal stupidity of the human race. It is always the same story. Men in all walks of art who have

the misfortune to be more or less personal and will not whittle off the corners of their 'eccentricity' to suit the masses have a hard time of it. I think I can explain to you why I have produced about thirty pictures a year. Some of the motives were painted four or five times; the best one was preserved, the rest consigned to the flames — they weren't even kept to be sold after death! And yet I am accused of insincerity. Oh, I am pretty well disgusted!"

Here is an American artist, without financial backing, working as bravely and sincerely for art as any Palissy the Potter ever worked; yes, working in that spirit of devotion that characterized the founders of the great Italian schools.

You may agree or disagree with his technique, but many intelligent critics agree that it is a stimulus and a refreshment — the ozone in the artistic atmosphere.

A. C.

SPAIN

Immediately after Christmas, 1891, Macknight turned from the charms of Belle-Ile to those of sunny Spain. His friend Boch, ever devoted, had passed several weeks with him and soon afterwards followed him to that country. The first stop was made at Barcelona, where two atelier friends lived, and a month was spent in that locality painting in the environs, which were hardly tropical enough for the artist, so he moved on to Valencia, Alicante, Murcia, and finally to Orihuela, where a congenial resting place was found. This old town is situated on a good-sized river crossed by a bridge over which the picturesque inhabitants pass whenever the pulsations of life are awakened. It boasts a cathedral and a bishop's palace, which add to its setting; but best of all for a painter, it is a town of blue skies, orange groves, and stage-coaches, and is bathed in soft yellow sunlight and sits at the feet of pink and purple hills. In this romantic spot, Macknight was destined

to spend several happy years — although at the same time they were in many ways the most trying that he was called upon to endure in his battles with the world.

While in Belle-Ile he had made the acquaintance of Miss Queyrel from Valserres in the French Alps, who was visiting some friends. The acquaintance ripened into an engagement and the marriage was solemnized in Orihuela. Miss Queyrel and her father came on, and Boch followed and was one of the witnesses of the happy event. Macknight's betrothed was a strict Catholic and the ceremony was performed in accordance with the sacred rites of that faith, awakening no little excitement in that sleepy town. Like the great majority of similar unions, founded on solid principles, everything turned out well, although for many years it was accompanied by much self-denial and hard work.

At the time of his marriage, the artist had bright hopes for the future; his work had excited wide interest but so far had returned but small dividends. The young couple secured a small house in the suburbs and proceeded to give it those attractions by little touches here and there which indicate the tastes of the occupants, and many of the furnishings were made with their own hands. The returns from the Belle-Ile pictures which had been sent to Boston, were not as large as expected and affairs became worse instead of better, so that for the next five or six years the Macknights were driven frequently to bitter discouragement, but the fight was maintained with loyal courage.

Fortunately, the rent of the little cottage was but \$1.50 per month. Brother artists who visited their establishment had christened it "Robinson Crusoe."

There were some other discouragements for our artist at this time besides those of diminishing income. He had difficulty in rendering sunlight as he desired and his work at the end of 1892 was mostly destroyed.

Macknight made up his mind that something had to be done. The conviction was finally evolved that to render the sunlight, it was necessary to treat it as simply as possible; all features should be thrown overboard, except those most vital in the landscape, and pure color only should be used; in addition, the picture must be painted as rapidly as possible, and to accomplish this result, the artist imposed a time limit almost arbitrarily upon his work. In painting street scenes, he practised for a long time the drawing of passing figures, and hundreds of small sketches were made, so that finally, after all the difficulties had been to a degree mastered, he could glance at a moving figure, turn away and record the vital points. Studies of many interiors were made at this time and of fruit trees.

The exhibition which was held in the St. Botolph Club in January, 1894, showed the result of all this application and it made a sensation.

1893

In February, 1893, an exhibition of thirty-five miscellaneous pictures by Macknight was held in New Orleans, Louisiana, at the Fiske Library Gallery, and in November another at Hampton College; but neither of these brought financial results to the artist. The criticisms in the papers were somewhat amusing, as for instance, " 'A Breton Village' has nothing very objectionable about it; in fact, it is a very pleasing start for a picture, but there it ends."

Again: "In selecting his subjects, he does not seem to care at all whether his pictures will be pleasing or not, as in 'Winter Sunlight' where half the picture may be profitably cut out, or in 'Between Haystacks' where part of a stack comes into the picture from the upper left-hand corner." Again: "No. 27, 'Green Grain,' is very little more than three horizontal streaks of paint: pink, green, and bluish gray." And again: "In many cases he has displayed a great deal of feeling, especially in the distances and skies, but the middle grounds are, as a rule, too vigorous." But Mr. Macknight had at least one convert in New Orleans, who took up the cudgels in his behalf and answered his critics.

Folio, 1893.*

. . . An artist who is by no means an impressionist, and who is most in sympathy with the great painters of the 15th century and with the artists of Barbizon — of the early years of our own age, gives a chapter from his recent experience which is worth recording.

"I returned to Boston early in October, regretting deeply that I was obliged to shut myself up within four walls just as our stormy autumn had blossomed into a season of rare and brilliant beauty, far beyond that of summer. As I unpacked my cases and caught occasional glimpses of last year's studio work, to say nothing of my ventures during the summer, my heart fell. I had nothing that, for an instant, recalled the splendor of nature as it had begun to burst upon me in this almost unparalleled month of October, 1893, and on which I had been compelled to turn my back and come up to town for possible city engagements. It was of no use to envy my landscape-painting brothers of the brush; I must make the best of it. In sheer desperation I bethought myself of a vivid, brilliant, glowing picture which I chanced to own, and which I can rarely exhibit even to my friends, so grievously does it shock their preconceived notions of what a picture ought to be.

*P. 455.

I placed it on an easel, and refreshed my eyes with it a dozen times a day. It represented a spring shower in Northern France. Did you ever notice how certain showers freshen the hues of nature, as varnish brings out the colors of a painting that have sunken in and vanished from sight? That is the effect given by this genuine 'impression' of nature. The tiled roofs of the peasant houses are as blue-purple as paint can make them. Dashes of yellow and red accentuate that purple, used as they are in its midst. The tender green of spring palpitates with all the colors that help to make it brilliant, to key it up to an effect far beyond the power of any single pigment to produce. It is wet, humid, almost a blinding rain as it veils the thatched roofs, the hay-ricks, and the roadsides. Only the tiled roofs stand out in that royal purple, which, by the way, you can often see in Brookline, Dorchester, and Roxbury. Probably you would not understand the picture; but it saved me from homesickness and the blues. I tell you that it gave me fresh interest in what some of our young men are trying to do, and it makes me feel pretty sure that we have all got to paint lighter, fresher, gayer, both indoors and out."

The picture in question was by Dodge Macknight, a young Providence man who went to Europe to study art, obtained what was needed in the way of elementary instruction; and feeling, every year, the impulse of color growing stronger and stronger, went to Southern France and to Algiers, and painted pictures so vivid that when they were exhibited at Doll & Richards' gallery they stopped the breath of the incoming visitors, who, in several cases, turned quickly away saying to chance acquaintances whom they might meet: "Don't go in! You won't like them. They are horrid! All red and yellow, and blue and purple and green. Come, let's go down to So and So's. There are some lovely things there by water-color painters who haven't gone crazy, and who see nature as she is; that is, as you and I see her."

A few adventurous spirits went in to see the new departure!

"I like his gray pictures quite well. That is beautiful. Just what I saw the other morning out of town, when I happened to get up too early. But I never thought it would make a picture. And I like some of those colored things too, now I am getting used to them. Mercy, what a blaze of yellow on the side of that peasant's cottage! Mr. Richards, do

explain this! Oh yes, corn hung up to dry. Well, of course it looks queer to us. But I suppose it is all right."

In came, now and then, a number of artists, and a very few students who are beginning to feel nature's real brilliancy and light, that has as yet been only partially expressed.

"What wonderful skies! and no two alike! How does he do it? Look at that distance, how it melts into the horizon like enchantment! and what a far-reaching space from the distance forward to the place where we seem to be standing; for I feel that I am in that picture, walking on that road, and just about to meet that group of peasants. By the way, do you see how the atmosphere enwraps these figures, and how it plays all through the landscape? I had the same feeling when I first saw in the National Gallery, London, that superb collection of Alpine pictures by England's great colorist, Turner. Macknight is another Turner, only he comes at the end of this century, and not at the beginning. A friend of his tells me that his one dread is that of falling into the *banal* in his composition. That is why he takes such unusual themes. Why, he paints from the top-story of a house; gets in 'all creation,' and seems to do it at lightning speed."

"Too purple? Well, so it seems, sometimes. But isn't that necessary in order to force the other colors to the utmost possible limit? That is what Macknight is working for—that with a dozen other things. Come now, let us be grateful for this eye-opener, even if it seems sometimes rather extreme! Do you remember one afternoon in September when, after nearly a week's storm and gray gloom, the sun burst forth with great brilliancy, and between the rifts of dark heavy clouds shot its beams, for a single instant, sharp into the east? On its way to the opposite horizon it flamed with unearthly brilliancy straight through the landscape which chanced to be before the fortunate observer. I was looking out from a rain-dripping porch upon an orchard, cool, moist, and green, except where this beam of light shot through, bathing the green grass and trees with a splendor impossible to describe, or to paint in any known method. The ripening foliage of an elm against the purple-blue eastern sky was a symphony in 'old gold'; while coming towards me, in that blazing gleam of sunshine, were three little girls, one with a red hat, another with a red gown, and there was also,

somehow, somewhere, a deep velvety blue and a white, which in shadow became pure cobalt.

“‘Oh!’ I exclaimed, ‘that could not be painted, save by a Monet or a Macknight! Did one in France, and the other in Spain, chance to see that vision as we saw it here in New England? I shall surely recognize that memorable effect if ever I see it painted.’”

And so it went on. But alas! for two years we have seen no more of this artist’s work. Art patrons will not buy; dealers cannot handle pictures which come back upon their hands unsold; and so the artist tarries in Spain, unhonored and unsung, while artists and pupils struggle on here, trying to get hold of the very ideas for the possession of which he is struggling and suffering in obscurity.

While he was painting in his adopted home at Belle-Isle, off the coast of Northern France, Monet, with his disciples, was struggling through the same experience, searching for light, more light! sunshine, more sunshine! down in the distant village of Giverny. I cannot learn that these men ever met, or even knew that they were brothers in progress and aspiration. Certain it is that mind force is just as powerful as any force; and from the hayricks and hillsides of Giverny there emanated a force which reached MacKnight at *Belle-Île-en-Mer*, and which also attracted to the former place a few men like the late Louis Ritter and the brilliant painter, Theodore Wendel, who, searching for simple and as yet unpainted themes, came upon this same Giverny, fascinated by its unique character, and little thinking what a train of interest and progress they were firing.

1894

Macknight was painting in or around Orihuela during the whole of 1893. His only child, John Macknight, now a musician of promise, was born in Valserres during the year.

In January, 1894, an exhibition was held in the St. Botolph Club, the leading musical and literary club of Boston; during the winter frequent exhibitions are held in the charming gallery attached to

the building of this club. Fifty-eight pictures were shown, twelve of which were lent by local admirers: Frederic Amory, Harcourt Amory, Denman W. Ross, Mrs. Eugene R. Knapp, Miss L. M. Nathurst, Messrs. Doll & Richards, and the writer. None of these were Spanish subjects. Eugene Boch of Monthyon, France, lent three Spanish pictures. Of the remaining pictures on sale, one was painted in the north of France, two in the environs of Barcelona, and forty in the "Environs of Murcia." The great bulk of the exhibition was therefore Spanish. The pictures were mostly painted at Orihuela, that city being in the environs of Murcia. No. 7, "Passers over the Bridge," represented the Orihuela bridge, and it was in regard to the persons passing over this bridge that the critics caustically remarked "There seem to be no toenails visible!" and "These are the figures little Willy used to draw on his slate!" This picture forms a valued part of the writer's collection.

Nine pictures were sold from this exhibition and it represented two years' work.

From the Folio, 1894.

Mr. Dodge Macknight, of whom we wrote in the December number of the *Folio*, has been seen to excellent advantage in his exhibition of water colors and a few pastels at the St. Botolph Club, Jan. 1-20. Nearly sixty pictures were shown, and the later ones show a great advance in breadth, simplicity, and in fullness and richness of color. Some of the quieter and more "finished" works won golden opinions from even the doubters; while the later pictures, Spanish chiefly, showed a daring, almost audacious use of color, which steadily fascinates the beholder the longer he remains in the gallery. In many of his later works figures are introduced, nearly always with the effect of motion. Bridges and streets crowded with people are very effective. Some of the most

charming of his pictures are interiors; as, for instance, "A White Interior," one hung with maize, another containing two large jars and an outlook into another room. An hour with these pictures is like a visit to rural Spain, from which Macknight has gleaned subjects that no other artist has found or has dared to paint. It was pleasant to see that many of these works were finding purchasers.

HELEN M. KNOWLTON.

From the Folio.

* * * In seeking for an answer to this question it was an extreme measure to go from the Dutchmen at the Art Museum to the brilliant water colors of Macknight at the St. Botolph gallery. The transition was abrupt at first. Our eyes were dazzled by colors for which, personally, we had no predilection: orange, blue, green, crimson, not to say magenta. But we believe in Macknight as one of the new men with singular steadfastness in following his aim, that aim not to be dimmed by any lack of popular applause, by any amount of prejudice or ridicule.

"Is he doing for painting what Wordsworth did for poetry?" was the pertinent inquiry of a highly-cultivated spectator. "If so, his work marks an epoch. To be sure, he does open our eyes to great fullness and intensity of color, but do we wish to see the utmost color of which nature is capable?"

Why not? England stood aghast at Turner, charging him with astigmatized vision and a general tendency to unsoundness of mind; but Turner cared not. He was put upon the earth for a purpose, and he wished only to carry out that purpose. So, too, Macknight. He revels in the most intense and rollicking colors that can be found in Algiers or in Spain. Shall we refuse to look at his work because it does not look like Boston Common or a Back Bay sunset?

Entering the gallery, the wall seemed like an immense palette on which the primary colors had been thrown in all their brilliant purity. There was no compromise about these lavish and prodigal hues. Macknight is a most daring teller of the truth. If the sky is as blue as indigo, blue it is. If the sand is yellow, yellow it is. If a field is covered with red peppers, red it is. If a cabin-wall is hung with maize, as with a

mantle of gold, gold it is. If a roof is orange in hue, down it goes, frankly orange. Aloes and cacti are as blue-green as nature meant they should be. But this is not all. With this tremendous force of color there is something else: a fine appreciation of distance, of aerial effect, and of a composition which sinks all needless detail in the great sweeps of the picture. There were marvelous skies, done with nothing but a little wholesome neglect; mountains that made dignified and retreating backgrounds — almost their only possible *rôle* in painting; streets full of people, hurrying along to market or to fêtes; bridges over rivers with a rushing tide of humanity that made the rivers almost lie still by contrast; sunny gardens with swift suggestions of trees in blossom; and interiors that were marvels of rapid execution of what has well been called "wit in painting." He is a giant who can see nature in such great sweeps of brush-work. When done it looks so simple that the veriest tyro may think he can do as well, or better.

A singular effect of this artist's work is found in the fact that the majority of his admirers are just two years behind in their appreciation of his pictures. Some have just arrived at a realizing sense of what he has from the first been trying to do. In two years from now they will comprehend his Spanish work of '93, just as they now praise his pictures of '90 and '91. It is best to be well ahead of the critics. When they shall have arrived upon the spot, the scene will have shifted and the artist again be far ahead.

Original as are Macknight's interpretations of nature, never by any chance does an object find itself in the wrong place. It is "impressionism" in the legitimate sense of the word. Nothing is allowed to interfere with the first idea which the artist receives of his subject, and never for a moment does his own personality enter into it. Unlike his brothers of the oil-brush, he does not seek to lay the prismatic colors side by side, as seems to be necessary in this modern disintegration of tone. The water-colorist, seeking for light and pure color, has valuable assistance from his white paper, his highest note. The oil-painter must get his light with paint, which may be thick and pasty unless wisely and skillfully placed in the right juxtaposition of colors, one with another.

From the Herald.

Mr. W. D. Macknight, the artist whose water colors have created a new departure in art which will be some day recognized at the highest market value, has recently sent to America two pictures that must be considered radiant examples of genius. The word is used advisedly, for no water-colorist in Europe has impressed his art with more splendid force than has Mr. Macknight in these studies of Southern France. They are not only most lovely in their poetic suggestion, but extraordinary in the vigor and freedom of their drawing, and the marvelous and daring color which dominates the observer like a burst of joy. Whoever owns a water color by this artist may deem himself fortunate, as the time is not far off when his pictures will be priceless.

VALSERRES

It was at this time that the artist became so discouraged at the difficulties which beset his path that he half resolved to give up further contest with fate. He left Orihuela with his family in March, 1894, and all went to visit Boch, who was established at Monthyon, France; and from there, in the summer, they went to Valserres in the French Alps. This was a crisis when Macknight's art came perilously near its end. He wrote some articles for the magazines accompanied by illustrations, which fortunately were not accepted or our artist might have found a new career. The text was later printed in the *Boston Evening Transcript*.

In the autumn, when the foliage began to assume its brilliant colors, the old call was too strong, and he again took up the brush and started a series of pictures in and around the mountain home of Mrs. Macknight. These charming water colors are among the most remarkable of all of the artist's works; the harmony of tones is simply wonderful. Dr. Ross of Cambridge owns one which is exquisite; and

Mr. Joseph E. Chandler, the architect, has two in his office which are enchanting. Perhaps the long rest from painting, the natural beauty of the subjects, and the despair of the artist at the thought of abandoning his art, conspired to produce these results. The subjects are generally mountain torrents and brilliant foliage, blue mountains, and some garden scenes.

1895

In May, 1895, an effort was made by a few friends of the artist in Boston to exhibit some of his pictures in a way which would not be attended with much expense, and to assist in the purpose, Mrs. Henry Whitman offered the use of her studio for three days. There was a printed catalogue of the collection. Twenty-seven pictures were gathered, eleven were Belle-Ile subjects, two were loan pictures, and the remainder were of the Valserres series. The prices varied from thirty-five to one hundred and twenty-five dollars; the result was disheartening.

The artist remained during the whole of this year in Valserres, continuing his studies in the spring of blossoming trees. He visited Le Puy, a picturesque French town on the summit of a hill. The writer had one of these water colors hanging over his office desk for several years; it was later captured by one of his daughters, Mrs. C. A. Van Rensselaer, and it is now in her house in New York.

The Alpine pictures are seen from quite a different point of view in the following extract from an article appearing in a New York paper in 1895:

On either side of the entrance to the Vanderbilt galleries are a pair of monstrosities signed by Dodge Macknight. Whether these are the result of the eccentricities of genius,

something too much advanced for the nineteenth century to appreciate, or whether they have been sent in and hung as a joke, I do not know. Had they been better painted, I should have thought they were escapes from last year's Fakir's Exhibition. Yet, knowing the seriousness with which such men as those on the hanging committee manage an exhibition of this kind, I suppose these pictures have been seriously considered and given their places. This is rough on the public. What we have done to deserve it, I do not know. Mr. Macknight's two pictures are Nos. 246 and 248. They are catalogued "A Rainy Day in the Alps" and "Winter Sunshine." In their defense, I heard one of the artists say, "They are not commonplace. Mr. Macknight had a thought." This is most undoubtedly true; they are not commonplace, but there are lots of very offensive things that could be pronounced not commonplace. I do not doubt that when Mr. Macknight made these sketches he had a thought; it may have been a good one, and when he noted it with crude lemon-yellow and brilliant purple, it was likely a good idea; but at the best it was only a note, a suggestion, not a picture; the place for it was the portfolio, not an exhibition where hangs the work of men and women who have mastered their art. The exhibitions during the last few years have been too full of this kind of thing. If artists wish to show their work in a half-finished condition, they should hold an exhibition of unfinished sketches, into which would be admitted leaves from sketch books, little daubs on pads, cuffs on which the enthusiast has imprinted the last rays of a fleeting sunset, and scraps of wallpaper decorated by the moony art student. An author's notebook is doubtless very interesting and very full of thought, and not commonplace; but would he on any such grounds be allowed to put his thoughts before the public in any such shape?"

LILLIAN BAYNES.

On March 10, 1895, Mr. Arthur Chamberlain published in the *Boston Sunday Post* a letter entitled: "Macknight's Art. What he has to say in explanation of his color scheme." The letter reflects so well the current interest in the artist and his work that the writer has given it in full:

The funny man on various Boston papers will lose one opportunity this season: Mr. W. Dodge Macknight has decided not to give any public exhibition. One may offer them sympathetic condolence; there are so few really new materials for wit, that the public has long ago excused their trifling with subjects that might seem worthy the dignified efforts of serious criticism.

Yet, it may prove instructive and profitable to consider the point of view of this young painter—who certainly is not so rich as to be without the incentive to paint popular and taking pictures—regarding this chosen art of his.

Replying to a suggestion that he should tone down his glowing color and bring his scale nearer to the average perception, he writes: "Your argument as to toning down my color is ingenious, but it will not hold water. There are issues at stake more vital than you seem to think.

"Is the first principle of art, liberty or not? Is art a corner of nature seen through a temperament, or not? If my temperament finds expression in the purest colors that are made for the moment (while hoping for others better), must my color be toned down and washed out and bleached away before so-called connoisseurs will look at it? One end of the scale has dipped and trailed in muddy browns and dirty grays for centuries; it is certainly but fair play to give the other end a chance."

To the argument that the artist, as a revealer, should not expect too much of his public at once, but should lead them step by step towards his conception, he replies:

"Nature is before us, infinite in suggestion, and let every man be free to choose what touches and thrills him. That is exactly his mission and he can only be a 'revealer' when he reveals what charms him without toning down or distorting his vision."

Further on, he declares with reference to his intense coloring, "I am not up on the tips of my toes, screeching high C. I sing soprano."

It is not necessary, certainly, that one should hold impressionism in general, or the style of Mr. Macknight in particular, to be the sole technique for the production of true art. Tastes differ, even when tastes are good; and Mr. Macknight is as slow to limit another's liberty as he is strenuous to insist

upon his own. But it ought at least to be clear that he is not a faddist, nor a sensationalist, nor an impostor, who has assumed a certain eccentric technique in the hope of catching the nimble sixpence.

The question is much larger than any personal one concerning Mr. Macknight. America has not enjoyed those generations of aesthetic training that make good taste a common heritage; and if her professed art critics incline more to censure and ridicule, than to careful study and intelligent explanation of the techniques and purpose that are being developed by artists of various schools, when may we expect to have a well-instructed public and an art that shall be creditable to us as a nation?

ARTHUR CHAMBERLAIN.

TO SPAIN AGAIN

1896 •

Friends in Boston having sold several of his pictures and four more having been purchased by Mr. Keith in Brookline, due to the efforts of a lady friend, a substantial remittance was sent to Valserres, and Macknight made up his mind to return to Spain at once; and thus came about the second visit to that country in 1896-7. He left Valserres soon after Christmas, 1895, and early in 1896 took up his residence again in Orihuela and was joined by his wife and son a little later. He once more resumed his accustomed work. A room was taken at the *posada* overlooking the bridge, and from the window the bridge pictures were painted. The price of this room was but forty cents per day, and by the exercise of strict economies the total living expenses were reduced to about one dollar per day. It was under these circumstances that the crisis in his professional career was successfully overcome.

At this time Macknight reduced his color schemes somewhat. He had already adopted this plan to a

certain extent during the latter part of his visit to Valserres; his water colors became a little grayer in tone, although to the casual observer this change may not be apparent.

The year 1896 was the only one in his career when he did not have a public exhibition somewhere. He was busily at work preparing for a resumption of his regular exhibitions in Boston.

1897

The sixth regular Boston exhibition was opened in the gallery of Messrs. Doll & Richards in March, after an interim of five years. Thirty pictures were shown; the subjects were all Spanish; the prices ranged from fifty to one hundred and fifty dollars. No. 27, "La Leja," represented an interior containing two enormous red pottery jars for the storage of olive oil and water, besides other crockery on a low shelf near the floor, now owned by Mrs. Robert J. Clark of Dedham. There were several pictures of the Arab town of Abanilla, near Orihuela, and others of huts in the Sierras, the bridge near the inn, and studies of still life. Two of the pictures were in black and white transparent color, with a dash of gouache. The following were among the Boston reviews of the exhibition:

Transcript, March 23, 1897.

MACKNIGHT AND HIS ENTHUSIASM—AN APPRECIATION

To start with a firm conviction that for one's self, at least, there is but one way to achieve that perfection which is dearer to the artist than are all the plaudits springing from an acknowledged success; to shape style out of personality; to wrestle with it in the face of all men, taking their jeers as part

of the price; then at last to find one's self master of the chosen technique, swaying it in a happy obedience, playing with it fearlessly, in the consciousness of victory; that, if his latest work may be taken as the final test, is the story of the long, arduous, and unregarded toil of Mr. Dodge Macknight.

* * * his art was not to be an art of theory, cleverness, or chic, but — to use his own words — “art itself, the expression of the personal temperament, the only thing that can possibly live, built on the solid and eternal base of continual communion with nature. “This is the art that,” he writes, “I represent.”

Bold words, these! They are a challenge and a defiance. Are they mere brag and bluster, or do they spring from honest and well-founded conviction? It seems impossible to read Mr. Macknight's letters, to catch the stress of his eager strenuousness, and not to acknowledge the sincerity of his utterances. Can he make them good? Let us judge him by his work. Mere blusterers do not cut themselves adrift with no adequate financial backing, for the sake of art and art alone. Facile compliance is a far easier road to the public's pocketbook. It is the fine thing in this new development of of Mr. Macknight's art that it is the normal and legitimate outcome of his chosen method. The color remains pure; its brilliancy has but gained in delicacy. “A Spanish Venice” has a soft loveliness of color that few would have dared to predict of this artist's style; it is a triumph of tender pinks and delightful tones of yellow, with a sky melting blue, and reflections that make one feel the transparency of the limpid water; the tree in the foreground and the greenery under the bridge are free from harshness, yet the light of out-of-doors is there; black is absent — probably there is not one atom of absolute black in the entire collection — the picture pleases, yet the artist is not stultified. It is an honorable success.

It would be unfair to Mr. Macknight to present him as indifferent or contemptuous toward honest criticism. His replies are as courteous as they are suggestive. Referring to Turner, he writes:

“He is the father of everybody who sees color in nature. And he saw it in his time with almost, if not quite as much intensity as we see it to-day. That's the extraordinary part of it. Suppose he dropped off painting color because other

people didn't see any? You can't imagine any such thing, can you? There wouldn't have been any Turner left."

Nor are all the pictures in the present exhibition at Messrs. Doll & Richards' painted in a brilliant key. "The Arab Town of Abanilla" and "Abanilla from Across the Ravine" are soft in delicate tones, though without abatement of the out-of-door feeling; justifying the artist's own statement, "I find that a picture by a colorist, even in grays (not browns, mind you, which are simply lack of color) will hold more or less even with the brightest things." It might prove instructive to consider how far this perception proved the clew that led the artist to his present success.

Yet it is when the old test of full light—"the light of the public square"—is applied, that Mr. Macknight's jewel-like purity and brilliancy of coloring is best comprehended. "A Near View of the Sierra," with the sunlight striking across the gallery-wall, is only the stronger in its superb modeling and more delightful in its tones.

"A Bridge Scene in Orihuela" and "Orihuela from a Distance" are good examples of the artist's capacity for opening-up a view; the first is vivacious, with a number of characteristic figures, and the second leads the spectator's eye through ever-changing beauties to the distant mountains.

Not garish, though brilliant, with ample modeling and vigorous drawing, are the figure-pieces; and though still-life seldom has much of popular interest, the most casual spectator, one would think, might be sorry to miss "La Leja," with its huge red semi-circular jars, their projecting points holding them against the white and blue shelves, with a wealth of ceramics in the background.

Thirty pictures in all, two of them showing what the artist can do in black and white—what a chance for a new illustrated edition of "Don Quixote"!—and scarcely more than a trace of body-color in any of them! Transparent washes almost wholly; surely this is as "legitimate" as it is remarkable.

Well may Mr. Macknight declare: "I like men with enthusiasm and noble impulses." It takes enthusiasm to dwell in places like Valserres and Orihuela for the sake of art, married and with a flaccid purse, and the nobility of impulse. "As long as a man is in earnest and has some solid stuffing in him," he writes, "I don't care whether he differs from me or not."

And again: "I sing soprano. It's my natural voice, but I don't go howling about the broad earth that soprano is the only voice worth listening to." Surely there is nothing arrogant or peevish in such admissions, but a generous nobleness of perception.

One would be sorry to give the impression that because this artist has at length his style well in hand, there remain no worlds for him to conquer. Rather let the cry be "Forward!" as he goes forth armed and equipped. Unless the signs deceive, this D'Artagnan of art may well carry a marshal's baton in his knapsack.

ARTHUR CHAMBERLAIN.

RETURNS TO AMERICA

The beginning of the "unpleasantness" between the United States and Spain took place in 1897, and in consequence Macknight did not accomplish as much work as during the preceding year. The Spaniards treated the American artist with respect, but unrest was in the air and he finally decided to return to his native land, after an absence of about fourteen years. His wife and child returned to Valserres and in September the departure was made on board of a fruit steamer leaving from a port nearby, and he landed in Brooklyn in October, without any definite plans. A friend was living in Greenfield, Mass., and there he passed the following winter.

1898

During the latter part of February, 1898, an exhibition of twelve of his pictures was held in New Bedford. The collection was miscellaneous in character. Two of the water colors were painted in Greenfield: No. 8, "Deerfield River, Mass.," and No. 9, "An Oak, Edge of Deerfield Meadows."

In March the artist brought a few pictures to Boston, and it was at this time that the writer first had the pleasure of meeting him.

MYSTIC

Early in May a group of seven of his landscapes was hung at Messrs. Doll & Richards' rooms, and were favorably noticed in the newspapers. It was then that Macknight met Charles H. Davis, the distinguished landscape artist, who persuaded Macknight to return with him to Mystic, Conn., where Davis was painting. This meeting finally resulted in Macknight's sending for his family, hiring a house, and resuming his work in Mystic; thus, while the Spanish war raged, the little family became again united.

While at Mystic, our artist began the painting of snow scenes which later were destined to form such an important feature in his art.

1899

In February, 1899, Messrs. Doll & Richards held their seventh exhibition of Macknight's water colors. Thirty pictures were shown: three of them painted in Spain, one near Paris, nine in the French Alps, and the seventeen remaining were entered as of "New England," really Mystic subjects. The contrast between the vivid coloring of the Valserres or French Alps pictures and those from New England was very marked. This was one of the most interesting of all Macknight's exhibitions, because it was the only one of importance at which have been collected, as a distinct group, the wonderful Valserres pictures. It is to the credit of the Boston critics that they recognized their great merit and received them

with open arms; the only surprise, however, was that they were not quickly carried off by collectors. It is probable that their cool reception on the part of buyers led the artist to consign them for some years to portfolio oblivion.

Lillian Whiting in the *Sunday Inter-Ocean*, Chicago, of Feb. 19, 1899, thus refers to this part of the exhibition:

One of these pictures called the "Joy of Life" ("La joie de vivre") is bewitchingly sunny and glowing. Everything in it is alive. The flowers are gaining a richer tint, the leaves dance on the breeze, the air is full of bird songs. Another beautiful effect of radiance and color is "A Peach-Tree in Bloom." One seems even to catch the perfume.

The following extracts from the Boston newspapers are added:

From the Boston Herald.

Dodge Macknight, the water-colorist and impressionist, who is one of the real sort, is living in Mystic, Conn., and is painting some of the wonderful scenery of that region. He has a little house way up the side of Pequot Hill, with a sweeping view from his studio windows. It is a tiny cottage, with a basement at the back beneath the studio. The hill runs so steeply down that one enters the house from the level of the road, and walking through the rooms to the rear, looks out as from a second-story window. The surprise is charming. Mr. Macknight would not be the fine artist he is, the painter of such tremendous effects, did he not love nature in all her phases, and his outdoor life is therefore first and foremost, then comes the studio, which is as foreign a corner as could possibly screech into the Nutmeg State. With all this, he has a pretty little garden of flowers and vegetables beautifully kept, taking all the care, and perfect care, too, of it himself — trees, shrubs, and vines — a cheerful little place as one could wish to see. If the "artistic atmosphere" of Europe could only be bottled up and imported for the benefit of artists over

here, it would be to their spiritual advantage; but Mr. Macknight seems to have solved the difficulty, as far as he personally is concerned, by planting himself in that sweet country spot, and insisting on living in free communion with nature. His later works bear witness to this influence, for while differing, of course, from the splendid sunshine of his Spanish pictures, the "local color" of these new studies shows what a master he is in obtaining "impressions" of fleeting light. Mr. Macknight is the one American artist who paints color. That is, he makes a critic feel there is something beside water colors in the subject before him.

From the Boston Evening Transcript, Feb. 4, 1899.

* * * The pictures painted lately in Connecticut are choice and original; there are good things about them that one does not see elsewhere; they are racey, full-flavored, broad, and big. The five congenial pictures hung in the group on the east wall make a most interesting study: "A Tangle of Sumacs" (30), "Road in the Wood-Snow" (29), "Virgin Purity" (27), and "Cold and Gray" (28) surround the gorgeous if somewhat incoherent "Joie de Vivre" (6), a sort of chromatic Fourth of July.

Down at Mystic, Conn., Mr. Macknight is finding a world of admirable motives for his spirited and untamed muse. (There is no muse of painting, but one must be invented for the sake of art criticism.) His "Song for Walt Whitman" (15) is well-named, because it has in it the American feeling of free open largeness, optimism, and natural impulses of hurrah-boys! We pity those artificial people who can see any vulgarity in this real thing. It is sunny, clean, generous, and sweet. It comes straight from the artist's heart.

From the Saturday Evening Gazette.

The exhibition and private sale of water-color drawings by Dodge Macknight at the gallery of Messrs. Doll & Richards is attracting much comment, both favorable and otherwise. After hearing the criticisms of many of my artist friends, I went there prepared to see some horrible caricatures of art. I was, on the other hand, charmed with what I saw. Mr. Macknight is an impressionist, pure and simple, and a good

exponent he is of the school. There are thirty pictures in the exhibition, and while there were some I did not particularly like, there was not one that was not full of light and air and "go." The sunny scenes were so happy that it would cure a man who was suffering from the blues. I do not know anything about Spain, its atmosphere or sunlight. Perhaps that was the reason I cared less for those scenes, but if his New England pictures were not true to the spirit, without being photographic in their realism, I have yet to see any that are. It takes time to become used to the brightness, however. His "First Snow" was a gem. His "Sunny Morning" was so full of light the observer feels tempted to sing in very happiness. "A Song of Walt Wihtman" was an illustration of how much poetry could be thrown into a picture of a New England country town, in which red buildings, awfully bright green fields, and white house-tops predominate. I shall always be glad to look at Mr. Macknight's pictures.

WILLIAM ALBERT NICHOLS.

In 1899 six landscapes were shown in the water-color exhibition in New York, and in December five were exhibited in New Orleans. Of the former, the critics wrote: "They are remarkable and sufficiently restrained to give an impression of truth to nature." (*Sic!*) At New Orleans, several admirers kept the atmosphere warm in the artist's defense.

SANDWICH

1900

While Macknight was in Mystic, he began to consider seriously the idea of selecting a home. His thoughts naturally turned to his native state, Rhode Island, although his attempts in art had received but scanty recognition in that part of the world; but nothing seemed to turn up within his means and at the same time favorably situated in a beautiful country. One day he met an old acquaintance in the South Station, Boston, who said to him,

"Come down to the Cape," and this resulted in a move to Cape Cod with his family in the spring of 1900.

He occupied a little cottage near the present East Sandwich station, and this cottage is now the post-office for that district. In the autumn a final move was made to his present charming home, somewhat nearer to the town of Sandwich, nearly two miles east of the village. Here Macknight has lived for twelve years. The grounds have gradually changed their complexion under his fostering care. Here shrubs have been planted to act as a shield or to give a boundary; here a fine kitchen-garden has been gradually developed; here peaches and other fruits climb a lattice as in the old world; and just in the rear of the house blossom many fine hybrid tea roses. The house is an old square Cape house of the best type, and it has responded to careful touches of harmonious color. Connected with the house is a studio where any visitor who cares may be shown some of the products of the artist's brush: water colors from the tropics or from the frozen mountains, from the sunny land of Spain or the hospitable sands of the Cape.

In March the eighth of Messrs. Doll & Richards' exhibitions was held in Boston, "depicting the imprint of the seasons upon the pastures, ponds, and woods of New England." There were thirty pictures; they were painted during 1899 at Mystic — mostly in the woods.

The following is one of the criticisms from the Boston papers:

* * * form a cycle of the seasons as they show their tints and shapes in the pastures, ponds, and woods of New

England. From winter to winter, through the intervening months of swiftly-changing phases, the painter, with a single aim, has set forth the aspects of nature, unveiled by the gilded fogs of pictorial tradition. In his fidelity to his ideal, and in the faculty that he possesses of portraying the distinguishing peculiarities of landscape themes, of seeking the most vivid intimacy, the most homely, real, and natural look of the country, unalloyed by prejudice, conventions, or mannerisms, as much as may be untempered by bias, personal or sectarian, he has succeeded completely. There are thus shown in his landscapes certain things that we are glad to recognize as beautiful, natural phenomena, which we have not seen painted before. There is pleasure in such discoveries, and there is gratitude due for them. Mr. Macknight has always been an independent painter, an explorer, an original. His work is not less brilliant in its color, but it is less harsh; he observes more and more closely, but not less broadly than before. Every good observer of nature is qualified to judge of the fine degree of objective truth in these landscapes. Fewer are those who can realize how isolated, unique, and separate are the lines followed by the artist, yet here is his greater claim. Take the three autumn pictures in the eastern corner of the gallery as examples which illustrate, perhaps as well as any in the collection, the absolute directness, integrity of vision, and painter-like way of dealing with appearances: "Blow, blow, thou bitter wind" (19), "Leaves are torn from the oaks" (20), and "A Misty Harmony of Rose and Purple" (18). These are so far from the conception of a painting as a design primarily, as a drawing tinted, that they might be taken as typical exemplars of the modern landscape point of view; for in them the idea of atmosphere, of movement, and of color is so predominant as to almost hide the fact of structure, which exists necessarily, but almost unperceived. A very near approach to the sanctum sanctorum is made; nothing more natural, more familiar, can be imagined.

1901

Although Macknight was busy getting his family settled in Sandwich, he found time to paint enough pictures to form an exhibition in March 1901 —

Messrs. Doll & Richards' ninth. There were thirty pictures, Cape Cod subjects: one snowstorm, several dunes, autumn foliage in the swamps, beach plums, and lupins. For the first time, the glorious and riotous coloring of the Cape began to appear in its true light. It did not take the artist long to understand the particular scenery of the Cape and to appreciate it at its just worth. The most startling effects are generally found there during the latter part of October or early in November, as the richer foliage effects are, as a rule, a little late.

On October 28 of this year, the writer accompanied Mr. Macknight on a walking trip over the dunes on "Sandy Neck," Barnstable, and it was an occasion which will never fade from the memory. This narrow neck of land is on the outside of the marshes in the harbor. It is composed of a wilderness of dunes and dwarf vegetation; extending for several miles on the ocean side is an interminable beach. No handiwork of man is anywhere visible and with the exception of a few shooting lodges, everything is probably in the same condition that it has been for thousands of years, save those minor changes that nature is always carrying out.

We walked upon the separating lips of the sand barriers between the dunes. The day was an inspiring one. Marvelous clouds rolled in majesty across the sky, but did not interfere materially with the brilliant sunlight effects. On the ocean side two long points jutted out into the sea, forming purple frames for the landscape on that side, while the deep green waves played with masses of reddish-brown seaweed on the beach. In the middle distance of the ocean, the water assumed a light blue color merging gradually into a pinkish mist upon the horizon.

Without moving from his position, the writer turned his eyes to the west, and there stretched the brilliant yellow marshes, scintillating in the sun like a great jewel and dotted with pools of amethyst water left behind by the receding tide. At our feet were the sand dunes of varying tints. Here was one filled with dwarfed oaks, partly buried, which were a mass of dazzling scarlet, while adjoining was a great depression of pure mauve sand across which stole long purple shadows. Everywhere nature was wild with a great riotous holiday of blazing colors, and in every direction that the eye wandered was a perfect picture that the hand of man could only imperfectly interpret. Such was Sandy Neck on that glorious October afternoon.

The papers were no longer filled with interpretations of the artist's work; the effect of the success of the impressionist movement also was beginning to open the eyes of the critics; for instance, the following, taken from one of the leading dailies referring to this exhibition, says:

“ . . . Saxon and Norman and Dane are we,
But all of us Danes in our welcome of thee.”

Mr. Macknight has been living in Sandwich the past year, and he has found a mine of splendid landscape subjects there. Cape Cod is *sui generis*; climate, complexion, flora, soil, everything, is distinctive. The dunes are a country in themselves — a wonderland of majestic forms and fascinating colors. The woods, ponds, swamps, hills, sea, and sky have a touch of foreignness; they hardly belong to the North American continent. Mr. Macknight has evidently taken great pleasure in exploring and painting this country, particularly its chromatic passages, which he has rendered with all his audacity and confidence.

1902

In January, 1902, a second exhibition was held in New Bedford. There were eight Cape Cod subjects. A critic, writing to the *Mercury*, says:

To one who is not accustomed to the study of Nature when she is glowing with color, the effects of Mr. Macknight's pictures may appear at first glance somewhat startling; but certainly there is never a false note in the harmony of color, and never hesitation in drawing, or feebleness in expression. One of the strongest reasons for the success of Macknight's work arises from the fact that all of his pictures are studied and executed directly from nature and never produced in the studio. This accounts for the great variety in his work and the stamp of faithfulness which is marked all over his drawings. Anyone who possesses one of these masterly water colors will always enjoy its power and charm more and more, the longer it is lived with.

The Evening Standard, New Bedford, Massachusetts, January 24, 1902.

THE NEED OF EYES

An exhibition of striking and unusual paintings which is now going on in this city is almost as interesting for the comments of the spectators as for the paintings themselves. These comments illustrate perfectly how little the ordinary person sees of what is going on around him. De Quincey, we think, wrote once in wonder at the small knowledge men in general have of the sky — of its changing appearances, its lights and shadows, its gloom and its radiance, its splendors, its magnificences. Any such exhibition as that of these paintings, demonstrates how little most of us know about the face of nature. We — that is, some of us — go into the gallery, look for half a minute at what at first glance seems to be a formless group of bright splotches, say "Oh, my! nobody ever saw anything like that!" (as a girl of the vivacious order screamed the other day), and go off to tell how "fierce" the show is. Suppose you sit down quietly for ten minutes, not too near the pictures, and let the artist's meaning percolate into your brain. If you have any sensibility at all, and if you have

any real apprehension of nature, you will soon discover that whether you ever saw scenes like these or not, the artist did, and that he has put on the paper his expression in color of what he saw. That you never saw it, is not his fault. Perhaps it is not yours, but it is surely your misfortune. The artist is trying to open your eyes; and if, with an awakening sense of what nature can do in the way of brilliant colors and splendid effects, and with some comprehension of what a man who has the vision can see, you go out into the fields and forests and by the sea, you will find that no painter can exaggerate, but that the trouble, if there has been one, has been in your own dullness of vision. Such compositions as "Lupins" and "The Marshes and the Sea," in the collection to which we are referring, are examples of what the man with the open eye and the open mind can see. We are not sure that in its details we can tell the story accurately, but the thought is appropriate. A pompous and self-sufficient critic, looking at a painting of a gorgeous sunset, said, "I never saw a sunset like that," to which the artist replied, "Don't you wish you could?" Criticism and query state perfectly the differing attitudes of different spectators of a painting. People who are quick to assert that they never saw anything in nature like Mr. Macknight's paintings would do well to inquire if they could see it if it did exist.

The tenth exhibition at Messrs. Doll & Richards' gallery was held in March, 1902; all of the pictures were Cape Cod subjects. No. 1, "Elizabeth and her Garden," owned by the Union Club, Boston, was much admired by the artists. No. 17, "The Grinding Waters," was a picture of heavy surf breaking on a sandy shore, and has been exhibited in Boston, New York, and Philadelphia. No. 31, "Through the Dunes," was one of the most striking compositions in the exhibition. It represented on the left a lot of exposed roots, like snakes, protruding from a dune, probably the remains of an old buried forest. From the right a long purple shadow followed the contour of the sand, while yellow and green-covered dunes

rose to the sky-line on the right; the sky itself was filled with clouds. No. 19, "Snowstorm," represented the artist's barn and his piazza roof covered with snow. It is a wonderful snow picture, full of the loneliness of a New England yard and the poetical charm of the storm.

From the Boston Evening Transcript.

MACKNIGHT'S WATER COLORS

To the Editor of the Transcript:—It is a real pleasure to praise Dodge Macknight's beautiful water colors now on exhibition at Doll & Richards'. Each year this master gives us a new sensation. We have wandered with the artist through Spain, France, and Belle-Ile, and enjoyed the charms of nature as he sees them; and what a wealth of revelation he has unfolded to our gaze!

For the past two years he has established himself upon Cape Cod near East Sandwich, and now we are learning how superb this inhospitable coast really is.

The present exhibition contains about a dozen pictures of sand dunes near Barnstable, and they are painted with a strength and delicacy peculiarly characteristic of Macknight's work. Then there are winter views which have the real spirit of the snow and wind. Here are also breakers dashing upon the sand, which require only the roar of the surf and the smell of the salt breeze to transport one to the shore. Here are also more inland views of cranberry bogs scintillating in the bright October air, and charming little ponds surrounded by purple trees and bounded by distant hills.

Such a wealth of color has surely never been presented to the public before. "Too much," some say. "Unnatural," say others. But I have noticed as time passes that the number of admirers is steadily increasing. The impression that these incomparable little pictures makes upon the mind is marvelous. A remarkable phase of the admiration they excite is the fact that so many young people are loud in their praise. The fact of it is that the plein-air school has made converts of the rising generation, and this kind of work has come to stay.

One of Macknight's water colors is an endless source of delight. They brighten any room. They are sparkling and cheerful. No one can have the blues long in their company. They glow upon one. Surely the artist has some trick (or is it genius?) by which he steals the most subtle effects of light and shade. Poems, I call them, but my wife says she has heard this before and I must not deal in platitudes. However, I have taken my pen only to warn everyone who may happen to read these lines to see and admire these water colors before they are taken down on Wednesday.

DESMOND FITZGERALD.

Brookline, March 29.

One of the best criticisms of this exhibition was written by Philip L. Hale in the *Advertiser* of March 27. He wrote:

. . . What impresses me is the immense sincerity of this work. I won't say conscientiousness, because as Hunt says, "Art begins where consciousness leaves off," which I take to mean that an artist gets things right not because he feels he has to or ought to, but because he likes to. These things in a large sense are very right. The burrower, the smeller of pictures, will find many things not to his liking. But the general aspect of these pictures is surprisingly right in truth to a first impression.

Among the pictures which I especially noted was one opposite the door (No. 5), of the back of sand dunes. It is a subject which almost any other painter would have passed by as unpaintable — as the abomination of desolation. But Mr. Macknight has perceived in this the elements of a picture, and has made out of it a very subtly arranged and able composition. The way the land running back into the distance models is quite remarkable. The nuances of color are so delicate as to be almost imperceptible and yet the middle distance takes its place in relation to the foreground. The shadows of the little hills may seem a trifle blue — yet I take it that their strength is needed in the general effect.

It is in the treating of a subject containing flowers that Mr. Macknight is particularly strong. No. 1, "Elizabeth and Her

Garden," (has Mr. Macknight too fallen under the ways of Elizabeth?). This picture suggests a light and vitality of color. The colors are dashed on with immense audacity. There is nothing "fade," weak, or tired-looking here. Those defects that almost always weaken water colors are wholly avoided. And the strongest water-color quality, which I take to be that luminous quality which white paper lightly-stained with transparent color always has, is made the most of. This picture looks as if the man had had fun doing it. The reds and yellows of the flowers are overwhelming. And Elizabeth's little white house makes a cool note in the corner. . . .

The *Transcript* called him "The King of Impressionists."

One of the interesting phases of the changes in the points of view was the fact that many of those who had followed Macknight in his preceding efforts declared in this, that he had "abjured to a great extent his rampant impressionisms," whereas if his works of 1902 had been placed side by side with those exhibited in 1888, it would be seen that they had gained in strength and color.

In connection with the exhibition of the Water Color Club of this year, the following appreciation from the pen of Mr. Philip L. Hale appeared in one of the daily papers:

* * * Mr. Macknight seemed to me the only one to put the thing through; the only thoroughly successful one. And strangely enough his compositions, though adequate and more subtle than they at first might appear to be, are not in themselves so inviting as some of the others. It is the way he has seen Nature, and the fact that he really has seen her, and the tremendously vital way in which he has suggested her, that make the value of his studies.

Yes, the pictures here which I like best are by Dodge Macknight. Here is a man who actually gets true values in water colors — or let us say true effects. These blazing, glittering snow scenes fairly take your breath away. One has the shock

which a cold bath gives — with the following sense of exhilaration. Here are things done absolutely without fear — with conviction. They are wholly personal. With many other exhibitors one says, "Ah, yes, Dutch school," or "Good old English," or "Neo-Japanesque" or what not? But Mr. Macknight fights for his own hand. Nothing was ever seen like his before. And they would not be so easy to caricature as one might think.

It is hard to pick out the best of these for they are all full of go. "Winter Morning" is very good with its subtle and well-observed relation between the snow in the foreground and that of the middle distance.

"Boy and Sled" is as unconventional as its title. It is seen and broadly rendered in an astonishing shorthand, so to say.

"Autumn Leaves and Snow" is gorgeous with robin's egg sky, pinky orange bushes, and white snow, and "The Sand Dunes" is full of brilliancy and vitality.

Mr. Macknight is one of the half-dozen artists of Boston whose work is most worth looking at.

In October, 1902, an important exhibition under the auspices of the Black and White Club was held in Plymouth, Mass., where live many admirers of Macknight's work, notably Miss Mary G. Bartlett, who has never faltered in her allegiance to his art. There was a printed catalogue of the thirty subjects, which were from Cape Cod, Spain, and the Alps. Ten of them were lent by Denman Ross, and two by Joseph E. Chandler, and one by Miss Bartlett.

1903

In April, 1903, Messrs. Doll & Richards had their eleventh exhibition, composed of thirty pictures, all of Cape Cod subjects. Some of them were painted at North Truro. While the pictures were hanging, John S. Sargent spent some time in the gallery with Macknight and expressed himself as immensely

pleased. It was the first time that the two painters had met.

The proportion of snow pictures was greater than in any of his preceding exhibitions. The critic of the *Herald* wrote of these scenes: “. . . Beautiful expressions of the character of the sunny landscapes of Cape Cod, where the half southerly climate that brings a touch of the flora of lower latitudes into that part of New England likewise gives fleeting duration to ice and snow. This fact makes itself felt in various of these winter landscapes — the evanescence of the thin snow mantle, the quality of the underlying vegetation showing through.

“In the picture called ‘Cape Cod in Winter’ this is expressed with exquisite tenderness, the green grass of a meadow just barely tinging the white surface.”

The critic of the *Transcript* found fault with some parts of the picture. He wrote: “His foregrounds are still disfigured occasionally by certain mannerisms which are perhaps unconscious, as, for example, the rough and apparently careless brush strokes employed to represent shrubbery, foliage, trees, grass, weeds, snags, etc. The trouble about these is not that they are unskillful, heavy, and seemingly reckless, but that they draw attention unduly to methods, thus diverting the attention which should be given wholly to that subject-matter itself.”

There was one picture in this exhibition which will ever linger in the memory of the writer. It was No. 10, “My Lover, the Sea.” It was painted at North Truro in 1902. On the right, the dunes stretched away into the distance. On the beach at the foot of the sand-cliffs, a transparent purple shadow follows the cliffs, and in this shadow little green plants are growing. The sea on the left rolls

lazily upon the shore, turning over ribbons of reddish seaweed. The distant horizon fades into a pink mist out of which appears a white sail. A crimson-spotted plant hangs from the immediate foreground of the sand-cliffs.

1904

Messrs. Doll & Richards' "Twelfth Exhibition" was opened April 1, 1904. Twenty-nine pictures of Cape Cod subjects were shown: the Barnstable marshes, dunes, lupins, etc.

THIRD VISIT TO SPAIN

For four years the artist had devoted himself to painting the scenery of the Cape and he began to long for a change; Mrs. Macknight also wished to visit her parents in Valserres; accordingly, in May the family set sail. Macknight went to Spain, and visited Ronda, Granada, the Sierra Nevadas, and Orihuela. It was a painting tour and many beautiful subjects were secured for the next exhibition. The family returned in November.

1905

It was quite natural that the thirteenth Doll & Richards exhibition of March, 1905, should have been practically a Spanish exhibition. The title page read: "Spain, as seen by Dodge Macknight," followed by the lines:

Si me pierdo, que me busquen
Bajo el sol de Andalucía.

Nine of the pictures were painted "In the Alpujarra," two at Granada, three at Ronda, eight "With Andalusian Gypsies," four in other places, and

four New England snow landscapes were added to equalize the temperature.

These pictures awakened a new spirit of interest and not a little excitement in art circles in Boston, and the papers came out in large headlines for their reviews. Miss Knowlton, who had written so many appreciations of the artist's work, sent the following lines to the *Transcript*:

Dear Listener:—In color, two M's rule the town — Monet and Macknight. Every artist who takes palette in hand will set it with his brightest colors, even if his subject is a gray one.

It is impossible not to be affected by such brilliant coloring as Macknight's. Spanish sunshine has told him its secret, and with characteristic fearlessness he has recorded what he has seen and felt.

Monet! You may like him, or not; you can't let him alone; or rather, he can't let you alone. All his life long he has been digging for treasures, and he has opened a mine which must be taken in earnest. Tradition has not helped him at all; or perhaps it has shown him what to avoid that he may be true to the new light.

Both of these men are discoverers, and great as their progress has been, each in his own field, it is impossible to tell where they will finally arrive. Let us bow to honest conviction!

H. M. K.

A little later these pictures were exhibited in the Rhode Island School of Design in Providence. The prices of the water colors varied at this time from two hundred to two hundred and fifty dollars. Although the results of the third visit to Spain were particularly interesting, there was no great rush on the part of the public to secure the pictures. This was disheartening, but it only spurred the artist to greater efforts. During the summer of 1905, he visited Grand Manan, an island off the Maine Coast and near the Bay of Fundy, and there produced

another of his remarkable series of pictures known as the Grand Manan series.

1906

In the early part of this year Macknight went to the Island of Jamaica for a few weeks to paint some pictures for his fourteenth Doll & Richards exhibition, which was held in the month of April. There were seven subjects from Cape Cod, among which was "A Blizzard," quite a remarkable snow effect; twelve from the Bay of Fundy (Grand Manan); and eleven "Jamaica" (Montego Bay).

The Grand Manan pictures were all of high rocky cliffs, around which the waters surged. The rocks were full of color and the ocean was in every case superbly painted. The Jamaica scenes represented sand beaches over which waved the royal palm, native huts, and long vistas filled with tropical vegetation.

The Grand Manan pictures are now nearly all owned by the writer and it came about in this way. On the opening day he was, in a bantering mood, charged with capturing the finest pictures in the show, leaving to others second choice, so he stated that he would make no selection until the close of the exhibition, when he secured all that were left of the Grand Manan series and later purchased others, so that he now has all but three. The writer also on the opening sent the following communication to the *Transcript*, so that all might have fair show to obtain any of the pictures they particularly desired, but few seemed inclined to make selection and the result was not encouraging for the artist; the fact of the matter is that it is human nature to regard the pictures selected by others, as possessing

peculiar merit, whereas in reality the finest may still remain.

DODGE MACKNIGHT'S WATER-COLOR EXHIBITION

1906

To the Editor of the Transcript: Anyone who is fond of original and beautiful water colors will be glad to learn that Dodge Macknight has opened his annual exhibition at Doll & Richards', on Park Street. Here thirty examples of the master's art are hung around the walls of this well-known and attractive little gallery. The writer has for many years contended that Macknight possesses not only complete control over his medium, but has in the rendering of his subjects the same kind of appreciation of nature that characterizes the leaders of the plein-air school in France. He is no servile imitator, as anyone familiar with his works will acknowledge, but has the faculty of expressing in his own original way the joyous freshness of nature, the sparkle of sunlight, the charm of color in the shadows, and the movement of the wind, the clouds, and the sea.

It seems to the writer that Mr. Macknight in this exhibition has surpassed any of his previous attempts. His present work points strongly to ripening powers. The pictures are much more even in excellence; they are almost equally interesting from the point of view of composition, of color, and of drawing. The subjects, too, are wonderfully attractive and entice the visitor to linger and enjoy a little trip or two into lands more or less unfamiliar. A remarkable power, this, to be able to carry one far away from the noise and bustle of a great city to the serene quiet and heat of the tropics, or the exhilarating air of the North, where great cliffs jut out into the Atlantic.

Of the thirty pictures shown, seven were painted on Cape Cod, twelve at Grand Manan on the Bay of Fundy, and eleven in Jamaica, from which Mr. Macknight has but just returned.

The artist's beautiful rendering of snow effects is already familiar to Bostonians, so the writer will not dwell upon these subjects. Grand Manan is less familiar to the average layman, and we naturally turn to the peculiar and remarkable rendering of these wave-washed cliffs. Directly in front of

the visitor, as he enters the gallery, is a noble group of six of these pictures. The topography is quite similar, but the treatment is quite different; here we have a gigantic cliff eroded by the ocean into enormous buttresses, which stretch out like great arms into the sea, all bathed in the bright sunshine of the early morning, which plays upon the vivid colors of the vegetation and the almost as brilliant colors of the rocks. Here by its side we have the same scene clouded in rising mists with the horizon wholly obscured; and here we have another point of towering cliffs wrapped in the darker shadows of the early twilight. It is seldom that one will find the ceaseless surging of the waves depicted with more characteristic variety than in these charming water colors, and they are all so even in quality that it is difficult to make a selection; one wishes to possess the whole.

In other parts of the gallery are the Jamaica pictures. In these the effects of the hot and brilliant light are so vividly depicted that we are inclined at first glance, almost following a matter of habit, to close the eyelids slightly in order to accustom the eyes to the strong light. The writer has never seen pictures which brought more vividly to mind the jewel-like colors of tropical vegetation.

In these water colors we have sandy beaches over which the lordly palm towers, or upon which the native boats are drawn in graceful lines, acting as foils for delicate distances; we have a few simple native huts stretching out into the water and drawn with bold and skillful touch against the bright waters of the bay; we have the gaily-colored village streets with their brilliant rows of houses and their winding lines, carrying the eye to distant boundaries of sky or sea.

Happy the possessor of one of these charming pictures; it will raise his mind above the troubles of the world and carry him out into the open air, where, in imagination, he can feel the stimulating influence of a real chat with nature.

DESMOND FITZGERALD.

Brookline, April 26, 1906.

Soon after this exhibition the artist made his first trip to Newfoundland. He found an interesting fishing village on the easterly coast, Torbay; and

remained there until October, painting many charming pictures of fishermen's houses, boats lying upon the beach or dancing in the distance on the dazzling water.

1907

In February, 1907, the St. Botolph Club offered Mr. Macknight the use of its gallery and his annual exhibition took place there. Fifty pictures were collected, of which twenty-one were lent by Dr. Ross and the writer; of the remainder, eleven were Newfoundland (Torbay) subjects, and the rest miscellaneous, but principally of Cape Cod. The Newfoundland pictures did not turn out to be great favorites with the buying public, largely, the writer believes, on account of the strangeness of the compositions. The *Herald* critic wrote: "But Newfoundland seems an unpropitious land for the artist, a land of wharves and gloomy shores." From this exhibition nine pictures were sold, which, on the whole, was encouraging.

Miss Helen M. Knowlton, the author of Hunt's "Talks on Art," quoted an admirer of Macknight's as saying, on leaving the gallery: "Those water colors in the black frames are yelling with color." Her own verdict was, "They are like a case of jewels." It was from this exhibition that the Museum of Fine Arts purchased its first Macknight.

Mr. Philip L. Hale in the *Herald* wrote:

What one feels most strongly about his work is that is supremely artistic. One cannot know the man or his work well without being quite convinced of this. . . . The special wonder about Dodge Macknight and his paintings, sheets of water-color paper daubed with what to the general eye looks like exaggerated hen tracks, is that with so few and so simple dabs and washes, he tells the whole story of the

topography of the region, and with infinite detail, nicety, and accuracy, too, and then bathes it all in the light of a mood, the appropriate hue of a sentiment, until for those who love such things, what seems at first almost insolent, wanton trifling becomes suffused with a certain undeniable richness and significance. One only knows that the rhapsody is a Macknight that you really like, that makes most other paintings cold and dull.

The *Advertiser* critic:

. . . Although Dodge Macknight is still one of the radicals, he is no longer looked upon as a color maniac. . . .

The critic of the *Transcript* roused the writer to the sending of a letter in response. The following article was the immediate result:

DODGE MACKNIGHT'S WATER COLORS

We have received from Mr. Desmond FitzGerald of Brookline a letter in relation to the exhibition of water colors by Dodge Macknight at the St. Botolph Club gallery. Mr. FitzGerald writes:

"The work as a whole is most inspiring. The writer believes that a careful study of Mr. Macknight's art will show a steady advance in his power to glean from Nature some of her most charming effects. The range of subjects in the exhibition is most interesting; it extends from subtle studies on the Cape to the novel coast scenery of Newfoundland. On one hand we have a dazzling flood of sunshine in Granada or Ronda, and on the other some wonderfully delicate suggestion like that of the 'Purple Brook' from Dr. Ross's collection. This picture, by the way, was painted, if the writer is not mistaken, in the high Alps. It is a consummation of technical power combined with an extraordinary ability to see what the awakening touch of Spring can at times offer us, if we can but open our minds to her handiwork. It is always a genuine enjoyment to find a landscape artist who enters into all of the varying phases of nature; who can feel equally the charm of a mist, the soft beauty of a snowstorm, the rugged outlines of a cliff, the dancing water, or the simple charm of an ordinary New

England landscape. Such an artist is Mr. Macknight, and long after his hand shall have failed to interpret nature for our admiration, his pictures will continue to be a source of inspiration and delight. One of the great charms of these pictures arises from the remarkable technique which enables the artist to place his colors with directness and purity upon the paper. There is such sureness of touch that the results are produced with apparently little effort. To this we owe a certain crispness and joyous freshness, and with these qualities too we have harmony of tones and colors most gratifying to the eye. In Mr. Macknight's work, while there is always great originality, and sometimes a just disregard of the ordinary ideas of composition which is refreshing, there is never anything savoring of 'brutality.' Brutality may arise from a choice of vulgar subjects, from dirty color, lack of atmosphere, bad drawing, or a hundred other causes; but the writer firmly believes that these pictures are the opposites of brutal, that they really portray the most poetical side of nature, that they are true symphonies in color values, and that they appeal to highly cultivated tastes; and in this view we have the concurring testimony of many of the most advanced students of nature, both from the artist class and also from keen observers on the great layman side."

The part of Mr. FitzGerald's letter which concerns "brutality" is a reply to what was written in these columns about Mr. Macknight's works. "Brutality," Mr. FitzGerald holds, "may arise from a choice of vulgar subjects, from dirty color, lack of atmosphere, bad drawing, or a hundred other causes." Possibly; but the brutality which we had in mind when we commented on Mr. Macknight's work has its source farther back, deeper down, and has little to do with choice of subject. It is temperamental. Moreover, it often goes with a certain kind of virile power, as in Mr. Macknight's case. Indeed it is quite possible that a certain brutality goes with a certain poetical quality too. Mr. Macknight has the merits of his defects in an eminent degree. Criticism has given perhaps a special significance to this term "brutality." We used it in that sense, without imputing to the painter any sin for being what he is, a man who sacrifices many of the refinements, graces, and amenities of pictorial art to sheer power and

brilliancy. But of course we do not expect Mr. FitzGerald to agree with our opinion, for he can see no defect in Mr. Macknight's pictures.

In November, 1907, the Century Club of Boston invited the writer to give an exhibition of some of his Macknight pictures at the rooms of the Club on Joy Street. Fifty pictures were hung and opened to the public between November 26 and December 13. The subjects were of Cape Cod and Grand Manan and excited much favorable interest.

In the summer of 1907 Macknight made his first visit to Mexico and returned with a series of pictures painted in Córdoba and Amatlán.

1908

In March, 1908, Messrs. Doll & Richards opened their fifteenth exhibition at 71 Newbury Street, Boston, the firm having moved their galleries from 2 Park Street. There were fifteen Mexican pictures, "The Tropics," six Cape Cod "New England" pictures, and nine "Newfoundland" pictures. This was by far the most successful of any of the previous exhibitions. Fourteen pictures were sold at prices varying from two hundred to two hundred and fifty dollars. On the opening day eight pictures were sold. The Mexican scenes were very brilliant; they represented native huts buried in a wealth of tropical foliage, streets covered by brilliant shadows, villages with volcanoes in the distance and blue trees and scarlet hibiscus flowers growing in luxuriance by the wayside. No. 20, "Looking for a Shot," purchased by Mr. George P. Gardner, was one of the best of the artist's snow subjects on the Cape. It represented a hunter crouching on the frozen marshes, surrounded by a wilderness of ice and snow, and

waiting for the birds. No. 22, painted at Grand Manan and purchased by Mrs. J. Montgomery Sears, represented the broad and open sea bounded only by the horizon, but such wonderful water had never been seen.

During the year a second trip to Mexico was undertaken and a new country around Cuautla visited. About thirty pictures were brought back from that tropical land.

In the winter Macknight went to Shelburne, New Hampshire, for the first time and started his series of White Mountain snow pictures, which have been the delight of all beholders. People say that they have never seen such snow pictures, and each seems to surpass the last.

1909

After the holidays of the preceding year, Macknight returned to Shelburne, and continued work on his snow subjects. The sixteenth Doll & Richards' exhibition opened in March, 1909. There were three, "Cape Cod," four "White Mountain," four "Newfoundland," and nineteen pictures from "The Tropics." All of the snow pictures were sold, showing the high appreciation in which they were held; five of the tropical scenes also were sold. The writer, quite by accident, had the honor of purchasing the first of the snow pictures from the White Mountains, No. 4 of the catalogue.

After the close of the exhibition the artist returned to Shelburne for a fortnight, and in the summer made a second visit to Newfoundland.

At this time Macknight visited a wild region of stormy shore with grand cliffs, in the vicinity of Flat Rock on the easterly shore not far from St. John.

When the pictures were brought back to Boston, the writer agreed to purchase the whole collection on the condition that the artist should return at once to Shelburne and paint a sufficient number of pictures to insure an exhibition as usual in the following spring. This plan was carried out and the artist remained with the snow for four months, bringing back a fine lot of studies in the spring. The Newfoundland pictures were very fine. A group of them was shown at the Art Museum, and later at the St. Botolph Club a collection of six was lent for the exhibition of 1912.

1910

The writer had the pleasure of visiting Macknight while he was painting his snow effects in February, in the White Mountains. He had developed a small house which could be moved by two men from place to place as desired by the artist. There are many difficulties in painting water colors in low temperatures on account of freezing of the water, condensation on windows, etc. These were partially overcome by the construction of a hut, five and one-half feet high, three feet wide, with a window through which the artist was obliged to crawl; then the window could be regulated at any height desired. Some heat was obtained by means of a kerosene stove in a small annex. The house could be picked up by means of handles on the outside. This proved an excellent contrivance and enabled the artist to paint under the most adverse conditions, in the heart of the woods or in positions commanding magnificent views of the mountains. We used snowshoes in traveling. Mrs. Macknight accompanied her husband occasionally on these trips.

With two feet of snow on the ground, the country in the vicinity of Philbrook Farm affords an unlimited number of attractive snow subjects.

In April, 1910, Messrs. Doll & Richards held their seventeenth exhibition of Macknight's water colors, composed largely of snow pictures, with a sprinkling of Spain, Jamaica, Newfoundland, Cape Cod, and Mexico. The exhibition was successful.

Mrs. Macknight and her son went abroad in the summer; so the artist remained in Sandwich until November, when he went to the White Mountains for a four months sojourn, painting many beautiful snow pictures.

1911

In March Macknight returned from the White Mountains, and in April his eighteenth exhibition at the gallery of Doll & Richards took place. It was composed of twenty snow pictures and nine of a miscellaneous character: two Spanish, two Cape Cod, two Mexican and three Newfoundland subjects. There is no doubt that a marked change had taken place in the appreciation of the artist's work by those who are in the habit of acquiring works of art. As illustrating this change, it may be mentioned that among the pictures sold from this exhibition was No. 1, "Market Day, Andalusia," for which three hundred and fifty dollars was paid. It was the same picture that was shown in 1894 at the St. Botolph Club and there catalogued as No. 10, "The Crockery Stand," and for which one hundred dollars was asked. It found no buyer at that price, seventeen years previously.

In the winter Macknight made his third trip to Mexico, visiting Coatepec, where he painted a number of tropical pictures.

1912

The artist returned from Mexico in February, and in March an exhibition of his works was held at the St. Botolph Club gallery; it was by far the most successful of all of his exhibitions, the gallery being well filled with admirers and purchasers. Out of this exhibition eighteen pictures were sold. At this exhibition, the third held in that place, forty-six pictures were shown, of which fifteen were lent. The prices of some of the pictures reached for the first time four hundred dollars.

The following are among the notices in the daily newspapers:

Transcript, March 22, 1912.

MACKNIGHT'S LANDSCAPES

HIS COLLECTION OF FORTY-SIX WATER COLORS AT THE ST. BOTOLPH
CLUB GALLERY ONE OF THE MOST BRILLIANT DISPLAYS
OF COLOR AND LIGHT HE HAS EVER MADE

Although the darkness of the stormy day, together with the snow that covered the skylight, made artificial lights necessary at the private view of the Dodge Macknight exhibition of water colors yesterday afternoon at the gallery of the St. Botolph Club, Newbury Street, not even these disadvantages could altogether dim the effulgence of his brilliant and glowing color and the luminosity of his almost dazzling sunlight; for, as had been anticipated, the collection is among the most notable ever brought together by the artist. The forty-six water colors, comprising landscapes painted last winter in Southern Mexico, and others painted several years ago in Newfoundland but never before exhibited, with many striking winter scenes in the White Mountains and on Cape Cod, have been so classified in the arrangement of the gallery as to form geographical groups. The group of six Newfoundland subjects at the right of the door, lent by Desmond FitzGerald, are new to the public; and other fine examples are lent by Mrs. J. Montgomery Sears, Miss Helen Sears, George P. Gardner, and Dr. Denman W. Ross.

The Mexican pictures are massed on the south wall, opposite the entrance. They constitute the latest phase of the development of Mr. Macknight's art. In that tropical region, with its rankly luxuriant vegetation, and its blazing sunlight falling in floods upon the red earth, he has let himself go with an abandon that can be imagined by those who know his passion for color. The richness and depth of the greens in his Mexican landscapes can hardly be described; and he has handled the problem of red tones in the foregrounds with unprecedented candor and audacity, so that these works may be said to produce an absolutely novel sensation. Few of the Mexican motives have skies in them, but the exceptions, including two beautiful views in the southwest corner which bring in the peak of Orizaba in the distance, are enough to show that the question of sky or no sky is simply a matter of personal choice and not of incapacity or indifference. One is given in this whole series a wonderful realization of the local color and atmosphere of tropical Mexico, a country of marvels in the way of color, which needs just such a fearless and unprejudiced painter as Macknight to do it justice.

The Newfoundland pieces from Mr. FitzGerald's collection strike another note with the same mastery and freedom. They depict the bold, rocky coast of that island, with the great seas breaking at the feet of the lofty and grand cliffs. Their forms are drawn in an authoritative way; and the largeness and grandeur of the subjects are interpreted with splendid vigor and power.

But there is no class of subjects that Mr. Macknight deals with more triumphantly than the winter landscapes of northern New Hampshire, and his snow-covered hills of Shelburne, with their frosty, dry, keen air and their intense naturalism, so vivid that it almost makes the blood tingle in the veins of the observer, are as marvelous in their reality as anything in the way of a picture can well be. The breadth and decision with which he gets his effects are unexcelled. Nothing but the essentials is given; there is not a superfluous stroke of the brush. The impression is, however, complete and final. The beauty is the beauty of nature itself; there is no addition to it, and no commentary upon it. The personality of the artist is submerged in the subject. Those who see as well as look

are transported bodily to the place and, so to say, left to themselves.

Herald, March 22, 1912.

RARE BEAUTY IN WATER COLORS

EXHIBITION OF FORTY-SIX PICTURES BY DODGE MACKNIGHT OPENS
AT ST. BOTOLPH CLUB

An exhibition of water colors by Dodge Macknight, one of the most brilliant that he has ever shown, was opened with a private view yesterday afternoon at the St. Botolph Club, Newbury Street. Mr. Macknight shows a power of vigorous expression, and an originality that amounts to nothing short of genius. Yet often as his work has been seen in Boston — and he has exhibited here continuously for twenty-five years — it always strikes the observer with a sense of surprise.

The present exhibition of forty-six pictures represents, in the series from Mexico painted early in the winter and more recent snow scenes, the artist's very latest work. The Mexican pictures, of which there are about a dozen, represent a distinct achievement in the matter of rendering the incredibly brilliant coloring of the tropics under the dazzling sun of that latitude. Some of the mountain roads and tropical lanes, with their brightly clad figures seen in sunlight or in shadow down long vistas of yellow-green leafage, are particularly striking.

Six coast views from Newfoundland, belonging to Desmond Fitzgerald, are no less brilliant in their way; as renderings of rocks in sunshine, purple-brown and jagged, the sparkling blue-green sea water washing around or across them, they are scarcely inferior to Monet's famous treatments of similar subjects. A group of splendid autumnal landscapes from Cape Cod likewise fill the spectator with admiration.

But it is after all in his snow landscapes that Mr. Macknight is most appealing. Who else has given the life of the New England winter with such graphic directness? There is the famous "Hunter," with a new masterpiece, "Out for Exercise," to match it. The "Road Through the Birches" is a superb bit of color, and "Glacial Gully" is remarkable for its originality of design and treatment. One picture that must strike everyone as outshining all the rest in every quality that

makes Mr. Macknight's art distinctive is the one called "Blue Shadows," a painting of astonishing carrying power, splendid in its power of brilliant and truthful suggestion.*

The exhibition of 1912 at the St. Botolph Club resulted in convincing a considerable number of persons in Boston, interested in art, that Macknight had in him the true elements for success: undoubted talents united to perseverance and industry and good staying powers.

On June 29th a kind of symposium was held at Spring Hill, the old name for the neighborhood at East Sandwich where Mr. Macknight resides. This little gathering was held under the auspices of the "Black and White Club" of Plymouth. Tables were spread under a large apple tree on Mr. Macknight's place and after a feast, the meeting adjourned to the artist's studio, where an exhibition of his works was held.

During the remainder of the year Macknight was engaged in improving his home and grounds. The old house was attractive and delightfully situated, but devoid of modern conveniences which have done so much to add to the comforts of life. As there was no public water service, it was necessary to introduce a private source under sufficient head to supply the house by gravity. A hot water heating system was added and an ell built to provide a new and convenient kitchen. All of this work kept the artist from wandering far from home.

There were many discouragements in connection with this work; the sinking of an artesian well through the hill back of the house, and down to the permanent water level, was most stupidly and unnecessarily

* This picture was No. 14 in the exhibition and now hangs in the gallery of the writer in Brookline. It has been much admired and has been desired by several collectors, not excepting one prominent art museum.

delayed from a period which should have meant only a few days, to many weeks; but at last peace reigned, all of the work was successfully carried out, and in the early winter Mr. Macknight departed for Shelburne to paint his snow pictures.

1913

On March 21 Messrs. Doll & Richards held their nineteenth exhibition. There were seven Mexican pictures, eleven of snow, nine of Cape Cod, and one of Grand Manan. All were priced at four hundred dollars and twelve were sold.

In September the artist started on an unusual expedition. He had read some descriptions of the painted cliffs of Utah which excited his interest, and after many arrangements he resolved to paint some of the scenery in the famous Mukuntuweap Canyon, on Zion's Creek, one of the sources of the Virgin River. This canyon had recently been acquired by the government as a national monument. In order to reach this isolated region it was necessary to spend two days in crossing a desert and to camp out while in the canyon. The fare consisted of bacon, potatoes, and onions.

The wonderful scenery, however, rewarded the artist for all his hardships. The canyon is about eight miles in length and it is formed of precipitous cliffs, several thousands of feet in height and composed of brilliant red sandstone capped with white sandstone which has the appearance of snow. It was once the home of cliff-dwellers. The majority of these pictures represented the westerly side of the canyon, where the country is more broken than on the east and more majestic. Just before the walls of the canyon approach each other, there are three

remarkable peaks visible from the road on the easterly side of the stream. These peaks form very picturesque objects. From this region Macknight returned in November with about thirty-six beautiful water colors.

1914

On February 10, 1914, the writer visited Mr. Macknight at his winter retreat in Shelburne, but as the temperature was -22° F. there was no painting during the visit, only a little snowshoeing, with a frozen foot under three pair of woolen stockings for the writer. It was on this occasion that the artist, usually so chary of his opinions, broke out with a vehement tribute to the art of the Japanese. Unknown to the artist, and while he was gazing from the window, the writer made a few notes of the explosion and marked well the very words and expressions of the conversation, retiring at the first cessation of hostilities to write it all out.

On Wednesday, February 11, the large Boston party staying at the Philbrooks' started on a sleighing trip, leaving Macknight and the writer alone in the house, which suddenly became very quiet. The weather was too cold to paint and matters were going rather slowly. After lunch Macknight suddenly turned to the writer and said: "Would you like to look at some pictures to pass away the time?" "Certainly," was the response. He then led the way upstairs to his room. About a dozen pictures were exhibited; the first was of a pool, long and narrow, with beautiful reflected colors, on the right was a high snowbank with an evergreen branch*; then came a series painted in the village of Shelburne across the river, including red and yellow houses.

*Now in Mrs. Gardner's Museum.

When the writer had seen them twice and conversation flagged, Macknight suddenly blurted out, "The Japanese are really the only fellows who know how to paint nature," and after a pause he added, "They have all the rest of us beaten out of the game. There is nothing in the landscape painters of the present day at all." Then he stepped to the window and looked out at the distant mountains. The writer pulled himself together and answered meekly, "Do you mean to include all the landscape painters?" He turned, lowering one shoulder a little, and rammed his hands into his pockets. "Oh yes! there is nothing at all in what we're doing." Then pausing a moment as if to consider his words, he added, "Most of us try to copy nature! You can't do that. It is the idea or sentiment of the scene that you have got to express! It is the personality of the artist that counts. The trouble with us is, we haven't any personality to put into the work." "How about the Chinese?" the writer asked, thinking of Sung and Ming pictures. But he refused to be diverted, and added that he was at that moment thinking of Hiroshiges' snow pictures which he had seen in San Francisco. "This man did not attempt to copy nature, it was the idea in the landscape which he has given us." "I went into a Jap shop and bought one." "Gee! that's the stuff." "These fellows know how to make figures keep their place." "They get their effects by suppressing the blacks, keeping the strong tones lighter, and leaving out unimportant details." "The present day painters put in too much; they don't know how to leave out." The writer then sounded him on how he looked at nature. He responded, "As a rule when we look at nature, we don't look at the foreground, we concentrate our attention on the middle

distance; the foreground is blurred, so is the distance. We should therefore paint the important parts of the middle distance carefully." Turning to one of his pictures on the floor, he said: "I have been studying for years how to paint snowflakes; I do it in the middle distance by painting them against some dark object; the Japs put them in the sky above the scene."

The writer then called his attention to another of his pictures containing a representation of the bank of a river on the left, with a great root of a tree overhanging the stream. In this picture, the deep shadow of the root was most carefully painted, while the misty river stretched away to the right. "Well! we don't always practise what we preach. Those Japs," he added, pursing up his lips as if to whistle, "were great men; their compositions were beautiful and every part of their pictures was beautiful. Go to the museum and make them hand out some of their snow pictures and study them."

The writer did not at this time venture to call attention to the personality in the Japanese prints which is a combination of three personalities: the man who makes the original drawing, the man who cuts it out on the block, and the color man who designs the system of colors which is the finishing glory of the product. This may be reserved for some future occasion.

On March 27, 1914, the twentieth Doll & Richards exhibition opened in Boston. There were thirty pictures, and although all were catalogued under the head, "In the Canyons of Utah," about a dozen were snow and Cape scenes. One of the most beautiful of the snow scenes, No. 25, called "Mist," was purchased by the writer, but relinquished to a friend

who desired its possession. It was finally captured by a third person and now hangs in a house in Beacon Street.

This incident is narrated to illustrate the growing desire in Boston to own "Macknights". Twenty-two pictures were sold.

The Mukuntuweap canyon of the Virgin River is composed principally of very brilliant red sandstone. Fortunately for the truth of the paintings, some Bostonians had just returned from the southern part of Utah, and they not only verified the brilliancy of the coloring, but stated further that they had been unable to find colors sufficiently brilliant to represent the scenery.

The summer of 1914 was passed by Macknight at Sandwich, largely occupied with his garden, the improvement of his grounds, and in preparation for a trip to the Grand Canyon of the Colorado.

On August 27 the artist, accompanied by his son, left Sandwich for this expedition. The original plan had been to visit the northerly side of the Canyon, which is wilder and more picturesque, and about one thousand feet higher than the southern rim; but circumstances favored a change in the plan. After reaching El Tovar by train, an arrangement was made to camp out on the rim of the canyon at Bass Camp, westerly from El Tovar, and from this point several beautiful pictures were painted; but owing to the illness of the housekeeper it became necessary to seek a new situation. About nine pictures were painted from Bass Camp — and all but two or three of them on paper of a different size from practically all of his previous water colors. While painting among the Virgin River cliffs in Utah the preceding year, Macknight felt the desirability of

increasing the vertical dimension of his pictures, and at Bass Camp the larger part of his pictures were painted on paper $18\frac{1}{4}" \times 22\frac{1}{4}"$ — in other words the height of his pictures was increased three inches; and this height was used in the subsequent pictures painted at Grand View, and also in 1915 at Buckskin Mountain, Kanab, on the northerly rim of the Grand Canyon, and in 1916 in some flower pictures at Sandwich.

In one of the Bass Camp pictures the figure of his son John was introduced, standing on the edge of the precipice and looking into the depths of the canyon. Others were generally devoid of foregrounds, and some of them with green trees on the right showed the strong feature of the "Scenic Divide," so-called.

From Bass Camp Mr. Macknight went to Grand View, near the head of a small canyon which is easterly of El Tovar, and there the artist found superb subjects with good foregrounds. He lived at the small hotel and had none of the cares of housekeeping, so that he could paint all day. The result was that he painted twice as many pictures as at Bass Camp. Some of the finest represented a distance of one hundred and twenty-five miles.

After completing his work, Mr. Macknight went to California to visit a brother who was ill and remained with him several weeks.

The winter of 1914-15 was passed at Shelburne, New Hampshire, for the purpose of painting snow pictures, for which there was a constant demand.

1915

On March 25th Messrs. Doll & Richards, Newbury Street, opened their twenty-first exhibition of

the artist's works. Of the thirty-two pictures exhibited, four were Cape Code subjects, two Newfoundland, three Mexican, seven snow, two Utah, and fourteen of the Grand Canyon of the Colorado. The latter were, of course, the leading feature of the exhibition. Never before had such remarkable pictures been seen of that great wonderland of Arizona.

At the private view on the day before the opening, eleven pictures were sold.

During the summer Macknight resolved to visit the northerly rim of the Grand Canyon of the Colorado in the Kanab country, which is wild and almost inaccessible, but much more broken and picturesque than the southerly side, which is so generally approached from El Tovar. This expedition, which was to be taken alone, required more study and preparation than any previous undertaking of this kind. Maps, government articles, and authorities had to be consulted, and finally individuals had to be engaged to furnish the necessary outfit and to have it all ready at Kanab by a certain date.

On August 9th the artist left East Sandwich for his long journey. On arriving at Salt Lake City, a narrow gauge railroad was taken to Marysvale, and the next morning a mail auto-car to Panguitch took him for several days' journey, via Panguitch, Hatchville, and Mt. Carmel, to Kanab near the Grand Canyon, the last outpost of civilization, and almost at the southerly boundary of Utah. Here a wagon, teamster, and supplies were procured and a start made for Buckskin Mountain, the site of a great national forest preserve on the northerly rim of the Grand Canyon. More than three days more were occupied in reaching the first site for a camp. After a variety of accidents, in one of which the

wagon was capsized and had a narrow escape from destruction, camp was pitched on the edge of the forest about a mile from the canyon. The altitude of this northerly rim is more than 1,000 feet higher than the southerly rim at El Tovar; it is more than 8,000 feet above the sea, and the climate is entirely different, being colder and with mountain characteristics. There is much more rain, hail, and snow; in other words, it is far more rigorous.

In one of Mr. Macknight's pictures exhibited in 1916, there was a view of his first camp, which is now owned by the writer. One of the bitter disappointments of this first camp was the loss of the horses; both disappeared, although hobbled, and they were not found for several days. In the course of the search, two wandering horses were captured and used until the old ones were recovered. One of the great discomforts of the trip was the lack of water. It became necessary to drive the horses several miles to water and two barrels were brought back to camp, one for the horses and the other for camp purposes.

In connection with this solitary life, however, there were great compensations. There were no engagements nor distractions, so that the artist had abundant time to paint; in fact he painted eight hours every day, and brought back "a bale" of pictures. Some of Macknight's letters were very interesting. He described his life as simple in the extreme. His one daily meal consisted of fried potatoes and boiled beans; his bed was made of balsam boughs. When he left, the hailstones were as large as marbles and there was frost every night. The following paragraph is taken from one of his letters:

"Gee! when I think of you people living at Rubbanec,* surrounded by flowers, eating fruit and vegetables, and sleeping in beds, tears as big as snowballs drop kerplunk from my eyes. Boo-hoo! I want to go home."

From the Grand Canyon Mr. Macknight came out by Kanab, and went again to California to see his brother, by way of Lund, a terrible route of one hundred and twenty miles in the course of which he spent sixteen hours in an automobile which was nearly wrecked in crossing streams. On October 28 he returned to East Sandwich with thirty-eight pictures and the writer hastened to see them. They generally represented the scenery from two points of view, looking to the southeast and to the west.

The winter of 1915-16 was again passed in Shelburne, New Hampshire.

1916

On March 17th Messrs. Doll & Richards opened their twenty-second exhibition. Although the prices of all the pictures in the exhibition were advanced to four hundred and fifty dollars for the first time, the sale was among the largest that had ever taken place. There were twenty-one pictures of the Grand Canyon, three Mexican (volcanoes), and six snow pictures. Notwithstanding the increase in price, fifteen were sold at the end of the third day and twenty-two in all.

On May 7th John S. Sargent, the distinguished artist, visited Macknight at his studio in Sandwich and spent a portion of the afternoon looking at his pictures. A few days previously he had visited the gallery of the writer and spent some time over the

*Rubbanec is the humorous name the artist has given to his place in Sandwich, on account of the way people turn to look at his tall hedge as they pass.

Macknight pictures there exhibited, showing much interest and admiration for them. Among them was a picture which Mr. Sargent had selected for a friend in 1889 from one of the exhibitions (a charming pastel) and which finally came into the writer's collection.

In the early summer, Macknight painted four pictures of flowers in his garden. They were of the increased height. In August Mr. and Mrs. Macknight made a trip to Nova Scotia to see their only child, John, who had enlisted for the great war and was in training at a military camp. He was taking his examinations for a lieutenancy in a Canadian regiment. It is expected that he will sail soon for England (September). Macknight says that in a few days he intends to begin painting a series of Cape pictures and will start at Sandy Neck, Barnstable.

APPENDIX

PUBLISHED LETTERS

ABRIDGED HISTORY

AND

TABLE OF "EXHIBITIONS"

PUBLISHED LETTERS

(*Boston Evening Transcript*, January 28, 1893)

AT THE BULL FIGHT

AN IMPRESSIONIST IN SPAIN—THE POPULAR FEAST OF
BLOOD IN HONOR OF THE VIRGIN'S BIRTHDAY

* * * let us to-day hie ourselves to Murcia and see what there will be in the way of gore. The blood of horses and of bulls we shall certainly feast our eyes upon, and if we are exceptionally lucky we can revel in the sight of human gore.

So here's the train; let us get in and take an hour's ride. If we get tired of being seated we can jump out and run along by the side of the locomotive to rest ourselves.

The car, divided up by low partitions into a poor sort of cattle car, contains some fifty occupants, mostly peasants from neighboring villages, all bound for the bull fight and running over with joy. In the exuberance of their glee they lean out of the windows and salute the loiterers at the way stations with yells of derision and insults of doubtful taste. As a result of this wordy war, tomatoes and bunches of grapes whang and spatter against the car as we slowly pass by. One gentleman, at the end of a copious repast of watermelon, fires the remains out of the window so skillfully that they slop over the face and hat of a spectator, and the villain is so tickled that he doesn't stop laughing till we get to Murcia.

There is extraordinary animation in the town. The annual fair is in full force. *Tartanas* rattle by; the streets are full of men on horses, mules, and *burros*, laden with all sorts of things from guitars to babies, and the sidewalks are crowded with men, women, and children talking loudly and gesticulating frantically. We at once feel that we are in a foreign land, for here is a little child running about entirely naked by the side of its mother, who is washing clothes in a hole in the sidewalk, and not far away a crowd surrounds two children playing the guitar and singing the melancholy refrain of the *Mala-gueña*.

The costumes are a strange mixture. In this vile *fin de siècle* that the French pessimists are so fond of talking about,

everything Spanish, national, is being slowly snowed under by German and English cheap-clothing fiends.

What remains are but spars from the wreck. The city-born people were done for long ago; if we still wish to see costumes of interest we must keep on the watch for peasants. Look! here comes a dusky maiden in crinoline skirts of vermilion and emerald green in horizontal stripe, her hair done up at the back in the form of a castagnette turned inside out; and not far behind her emerge from the crowd two or three handsome girls in short light-blue and pink skirts spotted with gilt spangles. But what the other dresses lack in character of style and cut is partially atoned for by the color. Let us give thanks that here is a people whose delight in pure color has not yet been distorted by bilious art critics with deranged livers. Black, white, cream, yellow, orange, vermilion, rose, cardinal, purple, blue, and green make a good enough color gamut for this simple race. Harmonies in ash-barrel grays and tobacco-juice browns are beyond its scope. Take the girl before us; she has dared to put on a bright pink dress and drape her shoulders with a sage-green silken shawl embroidered with emerald-green leaves and red flowers. Oh, agony! Let us move on.

The public park and square by the river-side are lined with barracks and shanties in which, as we pass, we see cutlery, fans, toys, and fruits, nothing worth looking at except the latter. Are you "hungry, thirsty," or do you want to "wash your face?" No? Otherwise we should have taken a seat in this shed and bought a large watermelon for five cents.

But the odor of blood attracts us; so after refreshing ourselves with a two-cent-in-the-slot drink of lukewarm root beer, let us move on toward the *Plaza de Toros*. On the way we pass the cathedral, in florid Renaissance style, not without a certain character. It would certainly repay inspection, but we cannot stop now.

At this window where there's a Spanish flag hung out, we will buy two tickets to the fight — three *pesetas*, or sixty cents and two cents added as a sort of tailpiece. Why under the sun this odd two cents? Sh! Let me whisper in your ear; —*day—Spanish Gov. gets left.*

We zigzag on, slowly following the stream of people; the rapidity with which beggars and cripples increase and multiply

is a sure sign that we are nearing some center of attraction. We plough our way through excrescences and protuberances to the sound of "*Ave Maria*," "Poor Blind Man, I," and "Go with God," and a little farther on come upon busy men selling cushions at four cents apiece. Let us invest, for cold stone is but at best a hard thing to sit upon. And now, emerging from a long, narrow lane, we come suddenly upon the *Plaza de Toros*, a huge coliseum in pale pink brick and rough plaster, guarded by mounted police full of dignity severe. We enter through wickets, walk around a bit in the outer corridor, then mount steps and pass through into the amphitheatre, an enormous stone circus without the tent covering. How many thousands of people can crowd into it? Let us reply not — we do not know, and to lie without the support of a guide-book is silly business, and we have none. From the ring below, surrounded by a wooden fence as high as a man's shoulders, run up twenty-five rings of stone seats, and crowning these come two covered galleries, one upon the other. The higher you get up the more aristocratic you are — exactly the reverse of an American theatre; those squatted on the top-most perch belong to Murcia's "four hundred." A part of the upper gallery, draped in red velvet with gold trimmings, is divided off with glass partitions, like unto a conservatory. This is reserved for the mayor, who is to be referee of the contest.

A band is playing in the lower gallery. The ring is of sand, with a suspicious red look about it. A watering cart is promenading slowly about inside and a man is cleverly jerking a hose attached to the tail end of it in such a way that it is extremely difficult to say which is manipulating which, but the combination sprinkles the ring in quick time.

While this is taking place, let us timidly glance up toward the nobility. Bewitching heads are peering down, enveloped in creamy white *mantillas*. Opera glasses point their muzzles disdainfully at us. You recognize the Countess X., with a big bunch of orange marigolds on her ample bosom? She would have fair success as a fat woman anywhere but in Spain. Here that size is in great demand, especially among the nobility. But let us be fair, taking the display of beauty all in all, it would be difficult to beat it anywhere in the world.

It is four o'clock. What remains of sunlight in the amphitheatre takes the form of a half-moon, a slice of watermelon,

the crescent line cutting across seats and ring. Pandemonium is loose, every man who thinks anything of himself has brought along a scup-horn, and is tooting himself red in the face, only stopping from time to time to take a drink of wine from a gourd or bottle, or eat a piece of sausage. The band is completely drowned out. Pedlers are selling bull-fight fans, soda water, and peanuts.

And now the crowd springs to its feet, gives an extra toot and a huge yell of content, and the noise ceases as by enchantment. The mayor of Murcia has arrived, attired in all the glory of a plug hat — the only one in the place — and sits him down behind the red velvet and gold trimmings. At the same moment a door opposite him opens and a horseman with black cape and knee breeches cavorts up, and doffing his antique, broad-brimmed hat, respectfully asks permission to proceed with the ceremony. His request being generously granted and keys to the bull-pen thrown him, he turns his horse around, dances him about a bit, then bending low in the saddle, shoots out of the ring at a gallop.

Then in comes the quadrille, and this *entrée* is the chief attraction of a bull fight. The great amphitheatre is in shadow, except this slice of sunlight opposite us. Thousands of people closely packed together become so diminutive that the color of their costumes is swallowed up, melted into a mass of dull black and blue-gray.

All the glory of sunlight and of color is concentrated upon the bespangled band that enters the ring. In the front rank walk three *espadas*, then the *banderilleros*, behind them come *picadores* on sorry-looking steeds with bandaged eyes; and, bringing up the rear, horses, three abreast, with brightly colored saddles, conducted by lackeys on foot in black coats and white pantaloons.

Gold spangles glisten, costumes, scarfs, and capes of scarlet, cardinal, green and yellow make a symphony of color delightful to the eye. With peculiar measured step, something like that of Bowery toughs demanding "Say, d'ye know who I am?" this scintillating mass of color struts across and salutes the mayor.

Then the lackeys lead out their horses and suddenly what is left splits up like the bursting of a sky-rocket. The *picadores* hastily conduct their ambling beasts over into the sunlight, the *banderilleros* shake out their dull red and yellow

capas, and a band of jumping, running, hustling elves springs out from we hardly know where — elves in vermilion shirts, blue pantaloons, and red Tam o'Shanter hats with blue knobs. They run about, armed with sticks and scurry over beside the *picadores*. They are the vassals, the gnomes, the imps — what you will — whose business is to prop up and encourage decayed horses, and in the hour of need to push them over upon the bull.

A door opens and something rushes into the ring as though shot out of a cannon. It stops suddenly, and then we see a big, fat, dogged-looking bull blinking his eyes, a rosette with streamers stuck in his neck. He is evidently unaccustomed to so much light; he has emerged from some dark prison, and is obliged to get his bearings; but in an instant a *banderillero* runs up, unrolls his cape in his face with a flap, and then flies for the railing, the bull after him. We see figures jumping over the fence, we hear the crunch of horns in the wood; spectators around us yell. A *picador* urges his horse over into the shade, takes a grip in the saddle with his legs, extends his lance, then over he goes in a heap, horse on top. Elves pull him out, others surround another *picador*, push him and his steed over toward the bull and then run behind him. The long, sharp horn pierces the horse's side as though it were jelly and the horse tumbles over, blood gushing out as from a fountain. "More horses!" yells the crowd, as excited as at any negro camp-meeting, while near us a little boy bursts out a-sobbing as though his heart were broken, his father consoling him.

Two horses lie dead; gnomes are pulling off their harness and trappings. A cornet sounds — the *picadores* lead out their blood-marked steeds, some of which are evidently the worse for wear, but they must yet serve.

Now the bull receives in the back three pairs of *banderillas* — a sort of dart bedecked with nigger barber-shop tissue-paper, implanted by the hand of the nimble *banderillero*. Taurus does not seem to fancy this sort of decoration, for he prances about, trying to shake them out and roaring with pain, to the applause and laughter of the multitude.

Again the trumpet sounds its *leit-motif* and an *espada* walks up and salutes the mayor, unwinding a little speech, the purport of which probably is that he will try to do his noble duty,

with the divine aid of the Virgin, and that in case of death it would give him extreme satisfaction to know that his chewing gum will be presented to his sister.

He scales behind him his yoke-shaped hat, disclosing to view a short pig-tail (by these signs ye shall know him) and takes a bright vermillion flag and a slightly-curved sword.

A curious picture — here elves raking and scraping sand over pools of blood, over there an *espada* making mysterious flourishes with his flag before the bull's nose, and indulging in hair-breadth escapes, some of which are rapturously applauded. Decidedly, we know not yet all the fine points of this game of bull. Here is a spectator near us with a printed paper like a baseball score, in which he marks the quality of the jabs and stabs and the number of slain.

Now the *espada* stands for an instant motionless, pointing his sword, curve downward, toward the ridge of the bull's neck. He runs forward then to the left and out of the way, and the sword rests implanted firmly. Everybody seems to expect the bull to fall dead. But no! he still keeps his legs, though groggy, so there is a necessity of a little jab on the forehead with the sword's point. On the whole, not a bad thrust as Spaniards take it, for yells rend the air. Hats soar out into space and fall into the ring. From what I have read we can expect to see noble ladies in the top story throw over gold bracelets, diamond rings, and other baubles.

Alas! nothing but a shower of two-cent cigars from the vulgar crowd.

The door opens again, in jingle the horses to remove the slain. The dead bull goes last, making a huge sweep in the sand. There are shouts and cries and snappings of whips, while the band emits notes of joyous melody.

The *picadores* come in again and take places in the sunlight to prepare and look to their saddles.

Why in the sunlight? Because the bull, emerging from the dark, has a first preference for objects in the shade. Like certain connoisseurs and critics in art matters who pass their existence in back alleys and city streets, sunlight is distasteful to him and blinds his weakened eyes.

There is a flash of dark and a black bull enters the ring and rushes around at a gallop, sending everybody leaping over the railing. They hop back as the bull goes by and the *bander-*

illeros are again at work unfurling their capes in his face. Elves push a horse into the shade and stamp on the ground to attract the bull's attention.

How picturesque a scene! Five *banderilleros* standing like statues in a straight line, waiting for the *picador* to perform his perilous somersault. Over he goes, and they spread out like a fan and with their capes distract the bull's attention, while elves pull out the fallen man. He has evidently been hurt, for one of them slings him over his back like a quarter of beef, head downward, and scurries out of the ring.

"Ha! Ha!" "Blood! Blood!" The fifth act in a dime museum melodrama.

The horse struggles to his feet. Glory! he can yet be used. Economy is all-important, even in a bull fight. See! there is an elf pushing in the horse's entrails and caulking him up with hemp. Jump up there, you *picador*, push and persuade the horse, with words of good cheer, to make a target of himself again. Tap, elves! yell, shout, cry! that the bull may again come this way. Here he is; his horn pierces the horse's stomach. Ugh! While noble *señoras* and gallant *caballeros* lean far out to feast their eyes upon the spectacle in all its detail, let us turn away and curse ourselves for having come to such an exhibition.

And so it goes. *Banderilleros* run up and implant their darts, and again comes the death signal from the band. And death comes hard to this bull, for in the words of the score, there is need of three sword thrusts, two jabs, and a stab with an apple pie marker.

The third bull is lacking in grit, and men around us jump up and indignantly apostrophize him. Oh, bull! why dost thou groan in this unseemly fashion? See! the proud young *espada*, in pink tights, indignantly wrests from your back the rosette and streamers, while tin horns toot and rattles clack. But we must have blood; if the mountain will not go to Mohammed —

To work, then imps! Push up a horse! Give him a shove, the horns will do the rest. And if the bull has not spirit enough to put himself in good position to receive the fatal thrust, tap him indignantly with the sword. Two jabs and a thrust do for him.

How many bulls are to be killed? Why six, and see, this one is inferior, too, for he jumps over the railing twice.

But the others that come after are courageous, and the sixth slays four horses. This makes amends for the rest. Looking at the score we see a total of eleven horses killed. This is a very decent slaughter; so, contented with everybody and everybody contented with us, let us give a last yell, throw our cushions into the ring, light up a cigar, and file out.

As we move along with the crowd, the cathedral tower bathed in a setting sun attracts our eye, bringing to our mind the thought that this spectacle has taken place on the day of the *Nativité de la Sainte Vierge*.

DODGE MACKNIGHT.

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IMPRESSIONIST NOTES

THE ORANGE-PURPLE LANDSCAPES OF SPAIN — HARD TIMES IN A SUNNY HUERTA — THE STREETS OF ORIHUELA

I

The royal highway from Murcia to Valencia, on leaving the first-named town, crosses the *huerta*, or flat, irrigated valley that extends for leagues to the north and south, and traversing a few foothills, drops down into it again and goes along hugging the base of a chain of orange-purple mountains, as bare a chain of sierras as can be seen anywhere in this world.

About fifteen miles out, where the white road steers straight ahead, the sierras which overhang on the left sweep down in perspective in a semicircle, cut off the road and plunge into the *huerta* like a rock-bound coast into the sea. From here can be had the first good view of the city of Orihuela. It lies there, a mile away, nestling at the base of the last spur like a long train of white railroad cars — halfway up the mountain a big building isolated, and down below, the town strung out with its half-dozen square church towers.

The city, on inspection, proves to consist of one long artery; resembles a centipede, squirming around, following the contour of the sierra, crossing the river Segura and coming halfway back again on the other side, the feet of the centipede being represented by the offshoots or streets, lanes, and alleyways which to the left run up into the very rock and on the right stop at the river wall. From the other side of the stream, at the extreme end of the town, the great bulk of Orihuela is exactly across the water, with its *gitano* or gipsy quarter turned toward us, and looks for all the world like a huge mass of old whitey-yellow plaster dumped down in a heap at the foot of the sierras, which, from this point, are grandiose. There they are, hung against the sky, strung along an invisible curtain rod, bare and ungrateful hunks of marble, quartz, iron and copper ore, splashed with deep red, purple and ochery

venomous green, and bored with holes, where races past and present have delved in a tired way for mineral treasures. Crowning the spur, at the foot of which lies Orihuela, are the ruins of an old Moorish castle; and on a certain night, once every year, a bright light burns there to commemorate the taking of the place by the Spaniards in the fourteenth century. A vague tale is told of men masquerading as women, following up a nurse who had access to the citadel at all hours, killing off the sentinels one by one, and ending up with a grand fifth-act Shakspearian massacre of king, queen, and rabble.

Now all that remains as handiwork of the Moors are the bits of castle walls on the mountain top; a square orange-colored tower or two down below and the buttresses of two bridges. From that time on to the present day the centuries have left almost nothing of interest in the way of architecture. The Gothic has gone, dropping a church door or two by the way; the Renaissance has left as remembrance the picturesque church front of Santiago, in yellow stone, with a big, rugged, well-sculptured saint with staff and book in the center of the portal. The rest of the monuments are rococo, without even the charm of barbaric ornament to be seen in some of the churches of Valencia. The city gates, there are three or four of them left, are niches for hideous tinsel and tissue-paper Virgins and old Jack-in-the-box clocks which have long since ticked their last tick.

But, nevertheless, the brush of time has smeared the entire town with faded yellowish hues that give it an ensemble lacking in most Spanish cities; for there are very few modern structures with their raw whites and grays and browns.

Take a lot of toy building blocks, of different sizes, that have passed through many hard winters, string them together, and you have a typical street of Orihuela in miniature. In the poorer quarters, doors serve for windows and long, slim, wooden gutters throw the rain into the middle of the street. They are entirely Arab in character, these houses, and the faces of many of the young girls who live therein need only to be decked with gold pieces, and their bodies with a few less rags, to transport us to the very midst of Algeria. The larger and longer streets, where the houses are of two or three stories, *smell* Spanish enough, as the French idiom has it, with their balconies and grilled, latticed lower windows, where lovers

in the stilly night murmur that old strain of "Thou art so near, and yet so far."

In the winter time they lie there, bare and nude, these building blocks, the long, irregular line of iron balconies wobbling away in perspective, and here and there a railing or two to keep people from falling off the roof; but when they put on their summer garments, in the way of white and green awnings, or their religious robes of yellow and red, then we may well look at them.

Nay, one street puts on its most picturesque habit in winter. 'Tis the *Calle Mayor*, the center of commerce, where all the dry goods stores are huddled together. On both sides of the thoroughfare, trailing from the third-story windows toward the sidewalk, hang narrow *mantas* or peasants' shawls, some fifteen feet long, giving to the street a Japanese aspect.

But be the streets ever so bare in winter, or ever so bedecked in time of festival, it is the beings who people them and give them life that put Orihuela in a place by itself. The reasons for this can be expressed with three p's—poverty, peasants, and priests. Being a *rus in urbe*, where the existence of the city itself with its twenty thousand inhabitants depends upon the *huerta* surrounding it, there is always a goodly proportion of uncles and aunts (as they call them here, in a scornful way) passing through, with their round, black, umbrella-like hats, their shawls, and their bare ankles and sandals. I have said that the life of the city depends upon the country that surrounds it, and things have gone so very badly in the *huerta* for many years that the smearing brush of time, when passing over the buildings, has not missed many of the inhabitants, thus blending all into one harmonious whole. In spring, in autumn, at the change of seasons, the people seem to spruce up a bit, to sponge off their yellow bath. But a suit of cheap cotton and woolen mixture, or a robe of six-cent cotton print, cannot stand the Spanish sun for more than a few weeks, and soon Orihuela takes on its old-clothes look, and things move on as before.

Shopkeepers, tradesmen, mechanics, working-men, working-girls, peasants, beggars, and priests, they come, they go, they furnish a note of their own.

The tradesman, with his derby hat and clothes of cosmopolitan shade and shape, in winter enveloped to the eyes in

his *capa*, or sort of double cape; the sports, who love the bull fight, with their picturesque wide flat-brimmed, low-crowned felt hats; the working-man with his little cap, often supplemented by a long blue cotton blouse; the girls of the people (the glory of Spain), the *chicas*, with hair in a Grecian knot, and cheap, but beautifully-toned robes of pink, yellow, or blue, in winter with shawls clinging to their graceful shoulders; the red pepper or *pimiento* trader, soaked in tones of most brilliant orange from top to toe — face, hat, shirt-sleeves, pantaloons and feet; the peasants, shirt-sleeved in summer, with vests unbuttoned, and black scarfs wound round their waists; the women, with crinoline skirts, and silk handkerchiefs for headgear, bringing into the town the colors of the oranges and lemons and the fruits and flowers of the *huerta*; the water carrier, and his little toy donkey cart with its half-dozen light yellowish-green *cántaros* set in holes; the rude, two-wheeled creaking carts, drawn by cruelly-yoked oxen in pairs, with slow majestic tread, while from time to time the drivers come to a dead stop before them and stretching out a long wand seem to say, "*Dominus vobiscum*"; the *estiercol* gatherer with his decadent donkey, costing from one to eight dollars, scooping up dust, dirt, paper and rags with which to form compost for the fields; and the beggars! say five per cent of the population. Optimistic beggars! none of your Jean-François-Millet, heart-bowed-down-with-care, mournful-winter-twilight beggars! Good old Spanish sunlight beggars, putting picturesqueness into nineteenth century clothing, combining circles, squares, triangles, trap-door, top-heavy derby hats, worm-eaten garments, alligator-mouthed boots and shoes, and making thereof subjects for a work of art; the halt, the lame, the blind, and the tired, in winter sitting in the sun, in summer seeking the shade, smoking cigarettes, taking with "God repay you!" a cent or half a cent, if you choose to give it, not seeming to care so very much whether you do or not; the priests! say another five per cent of the population; *Curas*, *Jesuitas*, *Capuchinos*, *Frailles*, they pass in a never-ending procession; the *Curas*, who say mass daily in the churches, ranging from lean to fat, with a predominance of the latter; good fellows, all of them, smoking cigarettes, playing at draughts, whiling the idle hour away at the side of the pretty girls in the cigar shops, mingling fraternally with their

fellow-men, never making you weak in the back with a "Young man, do you know your soul is not saved?" ready to do their very best to get you a little place in paradise, even if you apply at the last hour; a joy to the eye and the heart when they proceed at night to the house of the dying man under a splendidly picturesque red umbrella, accompanied by a string of persons with candles, while the little bell tinkles, the passers drop to their knees and inhabitants place themselves at their doors with rush lights. Then the monks, in heavy robes of brown and black, with heads shaved in circles, meekly stretching out their waist-cord to be kissed and, at the same time, stuffing provender into their fat begging-bag.

Here in Orihuela we may form a very good idea of the Catholic religion as it was centuries ago all over Europe. Churches, convents, seminaries, and processions still wield a mighty power. There is not, perhaps, one able-bodied person in all the town who misses mass on a Sunday or a holy day. It is always St. this or St. that, and the bells are continually whanging and banging and clanging. If Edgar Poe had resided here when he wrote his famous composition, he would have found a word to rhyme with bell that I do not think he used. (For he was a nervous, pessimistic chap, was Edgar.)

Bells are all right as long as they confine themselves to striking the hour; but when, in joy of the coming feast day, they burst out a week in advance, supplemented by booming cannons up on the mountain side, starting in promptly every day at five a.m., then nothing but good old English oaths will relieve the pent-up feeling. Faith has dwindled to half-belief, but it will be a long while before denial sets in, so all outward forms and religious customs are still strictly adhered to.

Long live spectacular religion, say I! Long live religious processions! Balconies buried under cloths of red and yellow, people hanging there like bunches of grapes; the whish of the sky-rocket, the boom of the bomb, the bishop under his canopy with its eight poles, tap-tapping in time to the slow step of the procession; the images of painted wood (unfortunately buried under Paris-green leaves and pink tissue-paper flowers, in a land where roses find no market at twenty cents a bushel). In holy week the Roman soldiers with S.P.Q.R. banners, tin helmets, and a patented step — religion's all

right! As my friend the waiter in the *posada* remarked, "I don't go very much to mass" (he lied) "still I'd rather see processions in holy week than a bull fight." The Inquisition has faded away to the horizon, a wee little speck, nothing more; the name of everyone who fails to confess at Easter is announced from the pulpit.

The mechanics of Orihuela are bravely wallowing away in the B.C. years. But, should an artist complain? The carpenter buys the trunk of a tree, and saws it up by hand. The shoemaker sews his boots by hand. The chocolate maker rubs together his cocoa bean and sugar with a hand roller. The man who wishes to bedeck himself, buys his cloth and takes it himself to the tailor; or goes to the hatter, picks out a formless felt, and has it shaped to his liking. The barber (thank God!) comes to your own mansion, with his towel and Don Quixote helmet, to daub your face with snow.

And the prices of wages? In the B.C. years too, ranging from twenty to fifty cents a day. The most skilled workman in the city does not earn more than sixty cents. Physicians take ten cents for a consultation, and, even at that, make a howling revenue in comparison. Bless us! and what do the people eat? Well, it is made of wheat, you know what they call it — bread. With beef-steak at forty-eight cents a pound, mutton thirty, and pork thirty-five, the inhabitant is a vegetarian in spite of himself.

In the summer time about everybody in Orihuela camps out in the street, taking turns, according to the hour and the position of the sun. With the thermometer at ninety or ninety-five in the shade, nobody wants to go into the house except to eat and sleep. And so chairs are brought forth and installed upon the sidewalk, and whole families sit there — mamma and papa in the places of honor, the interstices being filled up with children and cats. The smaller the child, the less clothing it has on. It is not uncommon to see a little naked mite toddling about; and be just as indignant as you like, O Mrs. Member of the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals, a more beautiful sight God never made. I, myself, am much more shocked when I look at those two ladies combing each other's hair by turns out on the sidewalk. You may, perhaps, be shocked also at those eructations emanating from gentlemen sprawled out after a hearty meal.

But that is what is called *character*! These are customs descended straight from the Moors.

Sidewalks are well enough in their way, but the inhabitant of Orihuela has a lead-pipe cinch on the street also. I have seen grave, calm old men in spectacles playing at draughts in the exact center of the thoroughfare, and horsemen and teams going around, as a matter of course.

I know of no more glorious sight than the *Glorieta*, or public garden, on a Sunday in the month of May. The air is heavy, permeated, saturated with the odor of orange blossoms. The garden, in the form of a hollow square, a solid mass of roses of every hue from white to an intense bloody red that spots upon the green, forms a frame for the people walking up and down the gravel. Poor and rich elbow one another. One would think that the spirit of democracy were rife. The band, up in its little roofed summer-house, plays marches and waltzes.

The kaleidoscope turns. Now robes, silk handkerchiefs, and *pañuelos de Manila*, jostle together in a bunch, with the colors of the spectrum. Now a subtle gamut of drabs, pinks, and gray-greens swells out before our eyes, and in the twilight hours, when the stronger hues are swallowed up and we see only pinks, light blues, and velvety blacks swimming in a lavender haze, pain and despair descend upon us, and we cry with the poet Corbière —

“Nature! On est essayeur, pedicure,
Ou quelque autre chose dans l’art!”

And how do the people of Orihuela amuse themselves? Well, those of a pensive turn of mind, like beggars and fishermen, take to the river, which cuts through the town as though the channel had been hewed after the city was built, there being no edging of sand or shore. The fishermen lean on the bridges, haul up and lower down bait; the beggars sit and philosophically watch them or the hurrying stream below, that varies from a pale green to a sinister blood-red when storms in the mountains open their flood-gates. Any ordinary mortal could while away an afternoon in simply watching the objects that float down on the bosom of the tide. One day I saw, in the course of two hours (it began *pianissimo*), a rolling log, a dead cat, a dead dog, and then there passed (a glorious FF

burst) the corpse of a man who had been assassinated somewhere up the river.

Another place of amusement is the café. There at one or two o'clock in the afternoon you will find a band of tradesmen and shopkeepers banging down dominoes, smoking cigarettes, drinking coffee, and making a terrific hubbub; above all, playing dominoes, making of the game a very respectable sort of four-handed whist with twenty-eight cards.

Then there is the *Plaza de Toros* — an amphitheatre of unpainted scaffolding — where, at rare intervals, cheap circus-men swing on trapezes and boldly spring worm-eaten jokes. Nobody is disgusted, be the performance ever so bad. Shouts of laughter greet the most ordinary sort of horse play. I tell you it is a great thing for a man along in the forties to be able to laugh when he sees a clown banging some one over the rear quarters with a stuffed club. That man can safely shoo away even the spectacled intellectuality of the Hub.

Once every year there is a bull fight by professionals, and from time to time the young men with the wide-brimmed felt hats pool their assets and get up a *corrida* of young bulls, heifers, or cows. Then the young *espada*, with his soubriquet of "Terrible" or "Vanquisher," dropping his sword and red flag, wildly flies for the barrier, and smashes into it ker-thump, or is pulled over, head first. And the nimble *banderillero*, after missing the young heifer's sides with his darts by a good foot or two, gets a leg caught between the horns and turns a disagreeable somersault, while everybody "Ha! ha's!" till the planks crack.

Now comes the theatre — the most extraordinary theatre ever constructed in any land. Imagine Robinson Crusoe strolling down to the beach and coming upon an old hulk full of undressed lumber. What will he do with it to amuse himself? Ha! ha! Visions of the Drury Lane of his time float before him. So he gets to work with his hammer and nails, and puts together a three-story theatre. Here is the proscenium; Man Friday paints the scenery with a goat's tail and different colored earths; here is the family circle, divided off into boxes, the plank benches in the *parterre* can be adorned with pieces of a red flannel shirt; there will be a bit, too, for the second gallery. Nigger heaven must go content with

scaffolding. There's nothing the matter with splinters as long as you don't connect with them.

This is the theatre of Orihuela. And the proprietor said, "Let there be light! And there was light!" You bet there was! Eight ancient small-wick kerosene lamps on a side. And the players? Could they be more naïve than the theatre? Hardly; in fact, they are often excellent, especially in *zarzuelas* or musical farces. From time to time an impecunious but courageous band comes to town from Alicante or Cartagena. The engagement commences with great *éclat*. For the first three or four nights the theatre is jammed; then the money in Orihuela gives out, and at the bitter end — the railroad track!

The railroad track! That brings to mind another amusement, this time of the *bourgeois* class. In the late afternoon hours two trains pass through, one on its way to Alicante, the other towards Murcia, and lines of men and women wind slowly up the long superb avenue of plane trees to the station, walk along the tracks and watch the cars go by. Even blind men can be found among the spectators.

And lastly, the religious fêtes — the *verbenas* — cakewalks, in a narrow street, strewn with sweet-scented leaves. A Moorish flute and drum discourse music, and pinwheels go buzzing up and down the street on a long cord.

Once every year there are excellent fireworks in honor of the Virgin of Monserrate, the patron saint of Orihuela. Towers and castles, bombs and rockets of well-combined colors fill the big square with a golden rain. The pyrotechnist hangs over the roof of a three-story house and cries to the crowd below, "Well how does she go?" And everybody yells back, "Bully!"

Then, "Hurrah for the Virgin of Monserrate-e-e-e!"

"*Viva-a-a-a!*" (Whish, fizz, fizz, boom!) "Hurrah for God!"

"*Viva-a-a-a!*" (Boom, boom fizz, whish-st!)

"Hurrah for the inhabitants of Orihuela-a-a-a!"

"*Viva-a-a!*" (Whish, whish, whish, whish, boom!)

"Hurrah for the strangers within our gates!"

"*Viva-a-a!*" (Boom, boom, boom, boom, bang!)

"Hurrah for the strangers within our gates." Can we let that pass? Never! Off with your hats, *Americanos!*

Here's to Orihuela! Here's to the Spaniard! A better nation never walked the earth! In matter of wealth and boasted civilization behindhand in the race, perhaps, but in the sterling qualities of chivalry, generosity, and hospitality leaving the rest of Europe hull-down at the horizon. *Viva España!*

DODGE MACKNIGHT.

(*Boston Evening Transcript*, March 24, 1894)

IMPRESSIONIST NOTES

AN AMERICAN ARTIST IN SPAIN—ALONG THE HUERTA OF ORIHUELA—SOME SPANISH LANDSCAPES WITH FIGURES

It is late winter. From my south window I look out over the top of my yellow-spangled lemon tree upon the *huerta* of Orihuela. The billiard-table valley, cut off from view at the left by the houses, convent walls, and church towers of the town, unwinds towards Murcia and the southwest. The yellow-brown reeds that rustled along the irrigating canals have been carried away, and the rim of the *huerta* cuts as distinct as the sea-line against the ever-accompanying range of light blue-purple mountains. The sky is without a fleck of cloud. The blue of the zenith gradually pales and dissolves into the Paris green of the horizon. The straight trunks of the palms, like lines in a spectrum, chop up the landscape into unequal portions, the most conspicuous trees being those near by that resemble huge feather dusters stuck in the soil, and others gradually drawing together till, far away, they accompany the line of the plain with a never-ending continuous series of little blots.

The bare, tangled fig trees, the fingers of the pear trees, the canes of the mulberry trees melted in the distance into a long patch of reddish purple, open out, spring apart as they approach, and on the right an orange grove emerges. The dark green trees, over the tops of which the peaked roof of a hut peeps out, are thickly spattered with golden dots. Under my eye lies a field of young grain, a beautifully translucent green in the morning sunlight, cut up with purple ridges into parallelograms for irrigating. Toward the farther end a half-dozen little figures are weeding, bent at a right angle, irregularly bobbing up and down, like the teeth of a machine.

The women were busy yesterday cutting up potatoes into small bits, and to-day, in that purple field yonder, they are putting them carefully down in lines under a long cord; and

shirt-sleeved peasants with big, acute-angled hoes, are breaking their backs as they cover them up in ridges.

Here is a field of lettuce; there is a line or two of *cardo*, a sort of edible-stalk artichoke, cleverly banked three feet high. Over there a wind-break of reeds, put into the ground at a slant, is protecting little beds of tomato or red pepper plants.

Along the shady roads figures pass at intervals — a woman enveloped in a bright-colored shawl, a man wrapped up in a black-and-white plaid *manta*. A little boy with an old felt hat that has taken on the form of a campanula bell, strolls slowly along behind a donkey of dejected mien, with a load of paper, rags, and dirt, brought from the sweepings of the town. From time to time he whangs the donkey over the rump with a stick and lazily cries "*Ar-r-r-re bur-r-r-a!*"

Sandy, uncared-for roads! Wily, meek, devilish roads! where ox teams dangerously tilt (I have seen a load of grapes take a dive into the canal), and donkeys sometimes, after a rain, doggedly stop short and seem to say, "I draw the line at this pond. I haven't got my life preserver with me."

The song birds are not yet here. The chirp of the sparrow only strikes our ear. But, oh, hark! Hear voices singing a mile away! Hear them singing near by! The peasant gathering oranges sings, the little boy with his donkey is singing, one of the potato planters suddenly bursts forth with a couplet — "My loved one has played me false! God help me! When you hear the church bells tolling a death-knell you need not ask why!"

The little villages at the foot of the sierras, with the purple roofs of their huts popping up, angles amidst a forest of circle-leaved Barbary fig trees — the little villages à la Hokusai, rendered all the more Japanesque by their mushroom-hatted inhabitants, are half-buried under the foam of the almond tree in flower.

Strong yellow-green of cactus, blue-green of aloe, celestial white and pink and tender lavender of almond flower, walled in with a solid line of sierras — 'tis Paradise! 'Tis an ecstatic fancy of boyhood's days; a landscape let fall from the Arabian Nights! Away with the paint brush! Let us sit down in the shade and dream away the hours, for we shall never look upon its like again.

But now the northeaster that threatened for so long is upon us in full force. It has been pouring steadily for three days. Last night it rattled like thunder on the roof. The wheat has turned a cold green, the slate-purple mountains have lost their tops in the mist. Hark! They are blowing shell horns at intervals — "H-o-o-o!" The treacherous river has shot up ten feet with frightful rapidity. It sweeps around the bend in whirling eddies, tearing off corners of sand as it goes, carrying by weeds and refuse and branches of trees. The peasant stands at his hut door with anxious face. The water as yet is but a muddy yellow, but if it takes on its horrible red tint, if it is pouring back in the mountains, then God be with us! It will burst over the levees, make a lake of the *huerta*, ruin our crops, and our huts will fall like card houses. Aid, contributions, will no doubt flow in from other lands, but only to melt away into the pockets of those in power, as so often before. The price of crops being already so low that we can hardly earn bread to eat, must inundation be added to annihilate us?

But no! Late at night the mist and cloud break away; the danger is past. Fervent thanks to our Virgin of Monserrate!

'Tis March, 'tis April, 'tis May — *le mois de Marie*. The fruit trees put on their resurrection robes. The flowers of the peach tree, so exquisitely pink, open out in strings of garlands. The plum tree throws against the blue sky a splash of white stars. The pear trees have bulged out into great big snowballs; with the faintest sigh of the zephyr they regretfully, silently, drop their flakes. The little quince tree, with its fragile white cups rimmed with pink, hangs over the reed fence. The spendthrift orange trees are opening and carelessly throwing away their divinely perfumed flowers of wax. A peasant is scratching the earth with a plough resembling half an anchor affixed to a long mast, or a crochet needle. Two oxen are pulling with majestic step. And the young man sings, "On entering in thy gard-e-e-e-n, on entering in thy gard-e-e-e-n, I took off my sandals; for I would not walk upon the flowers, when I entered in thy gard-e-e-e-n."

"*C'était le printemps, j'avais vingt ans.*" Oh, youth! Oh, annually returning season of flower and perfume and joy and crushing sadness, through which a ringing swan-song runs

its strain! The springtime of youth has passed away, and the sob must be strangled as we slide down to drop into the infinite.

The reeds are rapidly shooting up their lance points. The potatoes need banking up; ten white shirt-sleeved men with black waist-scarfs bend double and work like wildfire. Every hour they stop to rest and smoke a cigarette. The tomato plants are being put in the ground, each protected from the chill night wind by a fan-like bit of wiry grass stuck in the cleft of a stick. A man thrusts deep into the dry, sandy earth a stiletto, and as he pulls it out rapidly replaces it with a young plant. A barrier is hoed away, and water comes quickly and fills the furrows.

They are fertilizing the date palms. Pollen from the male tree is carried up and dusted upon the female flowers.

The fig trees have unfolded their yellow-green, arabesque leaves. Girls with network baskets of *esparto* grass are up in the mulberry trees cruelly stripping the canes. In the hut the silkworm is greedily eating his glutton repast on shelves of reed.

The full moon has hung out its white incandescent globe. Nature is flooded with electric light. The sky is an exquisite blue, the ground salmon, the sierras purple, the orange trees spot black, deep shadows lash the road. A sound of humming guitar floats faintly toward us. Let us enter the house of friend Francisco. A thin, hatchet-faced man with little bead-like eyes, dressed in pitiful, patched garments, is singing. He is a plate-mender. His children are countless. More likely than not hunger was gnawing at his vitals when he entered here; but he knew the table was ready for him. His fingers rattle over the strings; he sings verses of extraordinary sentiment. He eyes us with kindly glance, I know him well; he sees a stranger with me.

Ah! he has not forgotten us, listen: "These *caballeros* come from a distant land that I do not know and shall never see. But let them not think that because they are foreigners they are not esteemed. We love them as ourselves, for Jesus Christ has said, 'All men are brothers.' The noble Francisco has ever ready for them a bed and a humble repast."

Ignorant men in rags with sentiments like these? Then out upon stingy civilization!

Summer is with us; the thermometer is crawling rapidly toward ninety in the shade. Some crops have disappeared, been taken away. Tender greens make patches among the darker hues. Here the earth is never idle; two and three crops a year on the same land is the rule.

They are reaping the wheat. Men in shirt and drawers are cutting with sickles as though their lives depended on it, as indeed it does, for they are paid by the acre. Suddenly a church bell in the town sounds the supreme moment of the mass. Hats come off, heads are reverently bowed. At the last stroke all make the sign of the cross. From time to time one of the reapers bursts out with a couplet, interspersed with encouraging cries of "*Ole, ya!*" from his comrades. Perhaps for they weeks have eaten nothing but bread and vegetables, generally crude. Olive oil is nourishing, but costly. They have been known to drop in their tracks under the un pitying sun.

It has not rained since winter. The sun-god flares and pounds with fierce glee on the parched pink ground. "Water! water!" gasps Mother Earth, and the primitive, creaking, wooden wheels slowly turn, lifting up leaking cigar boxes of water from the canals into the ditches. An old broken-down horse or a pair of oxen circle round and round, spurred to their work by a little girl or boy — generally fast asleep.

Threshing is going on. For a week the peasants have been rolling and flattening a circle of ground in the fields. A man on a sort of little sled is being run round at a jog trot by a pair of horses. He sings a most weird air that is never heard except when he is working with animals. He is a man of some three-score years, but he cries out, "A white dove — a white dove has pecked me in the chest!" while the sled rides over the billows and breaks up the stalks into little pieces. At last the stacks have faded away, the wind blows off the chaff, and little brooms heap together the hard, flesh-colored kernels.

It is market day. *Huertanos* are coming back from the town. The roads have cropped out with great umbrellas — circles and parts of circles of white, yellow, orange, vermilion, blue, or pale green — a full cinnamon moon carrying away with it an orange-yellow skirt, or a segment of deep cobalt blue sheltering a figure in a cardinal handkerchief head-dress, blue-green shawl with orange-vermilion stripes and pink dress.

Black hats and waist scarfs, white shirtsleeves, dresses and handkerchiefs of all the colors of the spectrum, pull the vitality out of the landscape and leave it limp and gray. There pass all sorts and conditions of peasants on donkey-back; an angular black figure without human shape or form. 'Tis a widow with her shawl thrown over her head to protect her from the sun's rays; or a woman seated on a white sheepskin, the husband walking behind banging the donkey with a stick, or two men on the same beast, their legs opened out like jumping-jacks. Nearly all the women carry baskets; many have new brooms of split palm leaves, with reed handles. A drove of squealing, grunting little black pigs goes grudgingly home. A two-wheeled cart jogs along, over the top peep heads and umbrellas, at the rear end hangs out an assortment of legs.

It is noonday, the hour of the siesta. An oppressive silence reigns, peasants lie stretched out under the orange trees. The landscape quivers, the ground under foot throws back in our face the heat of an oven. The sky is bleached out, the sierras have faded into a purple, so exceedingly light and so excessively pure that the poor artist finds that he "ain't got any." Long strips of high hemp cut sharp with a brilliant, intense green.

The laborer can now brighten up his menu with fruit. Apricots, peaches, and melons are as fine as one could wish. The apples and pears lack the juice of those of Northern climes. Lucious green or purple figs are not even asked for; the younger man climbs the tree, the older besieges it with sticks and stones. Donkey loads of prickly pears, twenty for a cent, are cut open for you by women in bright colored robes; prickly pears which, perhaps, need an acquired taste, but ever afterward satisfy as hardly any other fruit.

Among the pomegranate trees, covered over with their vermilion bell-like flowers, they are picking string beans; a row of chattering girls in white, blue, and red, are filling their aprons. As the clocks in the town strike the hour the voice of the master rings out, "*Dios te salve Maria!*" and the women reply, "*Ruega por nosotros pecadores!*" Then the sign of the cross, and all fall to picking again.

The young farmer who has lately been disappearing at night-fall, has communicated with his father, who goes in

his behalf to the family of the loved one, making her a present of money according to his means. The bans are published. On an early morning *tartanas* rattle by, filled with a joyous company going to the church; returning an hour later they throw out sugared almonds before the huts of their friends; little boys run panting and begging behind. There will be a good repast of fowl and rice washed down with wine; there will be dancing with castanets, and singing to the sound of the guitar. A clean hut awaits the newly-married couple. The shelves are filled with new plates and saucers. There is a range of drinking jars set in holes, and a line of *ollas* occupies the chimney shelf. A copper chocolate pot or two hangs on the wall. On the door is a new poster, "He who enters here without first saying '*Ave Maria, purísima!*' is without shame." They are happy, they think not of what is sure to come. There is a vista before them, of hard work in the broiling sun, but they see it not. Fever will hew off their fat and paint them yellow; many mouths must be fed; wages will average twenty-five cents a day; their house-rent must be paid by irrigating the crops at all hours of the day and night. As the old joke goes, they begin life without a cent, and they end up owing for the basket. Their clothes must be patched and repatched till they hold together no longer; the same thin cotton summer garment must shelter them in winter, re-enforced with shawl or *manta*. But they go regularly to mass; they are sure that after this life shall have burnt out, another better one awaits them in *La Gloria*.

It is autumn, Indian corn is ripe, the trunks of the palm trees carry festoons of yellow, it hangs on the fences and under the eaves. The interiors of the huts are filled with bundles of it drying.

The tall reeds along the river and the water-courses have shot up their plumes; their mission is fulfilled; their activity is over.

The girls in blue, cardinal, and vermilion, that we saw last summer busy among the string beans, are now picking red peppers and filling sacks with them to be taken to the sierras and spread out and dried in the sun. The distant mountains are patched red with them at their base. Where grain was last threshed there is a red circle of them, and men are dancing a jig upon them or banging with clubs. They paint them-

selves a vivid orange, and cough and go often to the water-jug.

Now for hemp. Cut it with sickles and take it to the little ponds, put it in the water, keep it under the surface with heavy stones. Is it rotted? Then put on a rag or two, wade in and pull it out, and pile it in tent-like stacks to dry. The air is redolent with horrible odor of skunk.

Men with strange faces are among us. They have suddenly arrived from up country. Dressed in flowing white pantaloons, they are crushing the hemp-stalks with bladed logs. They pump, pump, pump with the handle, they pull the hair-like stuff through the closed jack-knife, they shake it in the wind, they perform strange contortions while standing on one leg.

It is early winter, They are gathering dates. A man with a circle of strong rope inclosing himself and the trunk, jerks himself up the tree and cuts off the bunches. They will be ripened in vinegar. The reeds are being cut, and stored in bundles; they are repairing the fences with them.

Christmas will soon be here. *Viva!* Turkeys spot the landscape on all sides; dressed in black, red, and blue, they strut about, open their fans, and puff out their chests, while their bead-like eyes wickedly glow.

A long string of peasants on donkeys comes slowly along the road with huge gourds full of wine in the panniers. They are happy. Thoughts of the only good repasts of the year, combined with a few draughts of the rosy god have made them content with the universe entire. The chap in the rear cannot sit straight — his words also have a jag. They have hurrahed for everything on earth and in heaven. As they pass the cry rings out, "Hurrah for the artist! *Ole!* Paint our portrait, will you! Got s'm exc'lent wine here, my fren (*so-o-o, burra!*) come 'nd have a drink!"

The chocolate pots have been scoured bright with sand and lemon juice, and hung upon the white wall against a sheet of brand new pink or purple paper. The plates have been dusted. The cups and saucers have been carefully arranged on the shelves, and oranges set in decoratively between them. The tables have been scrubbed white. Women are busy at their domed clay ovens baking little round cookies made with carefully hoarded eggs. Sugar is dear, olive oil

is dear, but let us eat well at Christmas-tide, for the rest of the year God will provide.

'Tis Christmas Eve. At Francisco's house they have been preparing a painting of the Virgin of Monserrate. It is bedecked with pink tissue-paper roses and poisonous green leaves. It is in horrible taste, but they think it beautiful. They are no worse than others, more cultivated, who howl about art on the house-tops, and invest their money in baked beans and automobiles while the muse walks the pavement in penury and rags.

The painting is mounted on a standard, fifty men with lanterns accompany it. They enter a hut, the occupants have been eagerly awaiting them. The Virgin is regarded with love and rapture. Guitars hum, a violin creaks, a soloist (it's our old friend the plate-mender) sings a subtle minor strain that gradually merges into a strong chorus in major key sung by the fifty lusty-voiced men. Then the offering to the Virgin is accepted — a few sous, a chicken, a turkey, or a bunch of dates; and out once more into the night, and on to the next hut, till the Blessed Mother of God shall have entered into every house in the *huerta*.

'Tis noon on Christmas Day. When the cold day was breaking we went to mass. *Viva Dios!* Now for the repast! The turkey has been cut up and stewed with rice and saffron, and is waiting while we commence with the dumplings, stuck full of pine seeds of an appetizing flavor. Now set the big blue plate on the table. Are all provided with wooden spoons? Then pitch in and eat! Pass the wine carafe with its long slender spout! Drink and be merry! The bones go on the earth floor, cats are growling and disputing between our legs. Bring out the cakes! Out with the *aguardiente!*

Have all finished? Then roll and light a cigarette, and off with our hats while every one in turn recites with bowed head and lowered voice, the *Dios te salve, Maria*, and the *Padre Nuestro*. Now let the sons and daughters come to kiss the father's hand.

It is New Year's Day. The offerings to the Virgin, in the way of fruits and fowls, are being raffled off. Planks set up on stones form settees that line the four sides of the yard. The women sit closely squeezed together; they anxiously regard the cards in their hands, while a man holds a pack in a

plate, and a little girl cuts. Five of hearts! Who has it? The big fat woman in the corner who has already won a turkey and two chickens. Out with something else! Start up the music! Plum-plum-plum, plum-plum-plum, goes the guitar; week, week-a-week, week, week, squeaks the violin; click-a-lick, click-a-lick, sound the castanets. A youth and a maiden are dancing, separate and facing one another. With one hand at the breast, the other extended, their fingers drum on the shells. The man advances, the woman recedes. He tries to captivate her, she coquettishly eludes him; she turns, she passes behind him. At last she is subjugated, they dance in rhythm, he falls to his knees, and she taps the castanets together over his head. Well done!

Now everything has been raffled off, and we have won nothing. Patience! Better luck next year! If we haven't a fowl to carry home, it's because the Virgin wished it otherwise.

It is late winter. The year has completed its cycle. From my south window I look out over the top of my yellow-spangled lemon tree. * * * * *

DODGE MACKNIGHT.

(*Boston Evening Transcript*, February 16, 1898)

AN ARTIST IN SPAIN

ABANILLA, A BY-PATH VILLAGE IN ANDALUSIA

The ordinary New Englander, of course, doesn't give the mildest sort of a cuss what the place he lives in is called. A rose by any other name, etc. It may be so. However, if I were asked to show my preference by vote between, say, Skunktown or Jink's Corners and Abanilla I should fall all over myself in my anxiety to get to the polls.

"How do you pronounce your Spanish word, please? Well, A-ba-neel-ya, with broad sonorous a's and hardly a suspicion of an l, would perhaps do fairly well. *Ay de mi!* As my tongue lingers caressingly over it, I see in my mind's eye fair Andalusia and once more I rove in white pajamas under a pure pale blue sky among tones of topaz and emerald and sapphire.

Abanilla! Yes, I went out there twice and I have been trying ever since to think up a comparison that would give some sort of an idea of the road leading there from Orihuela. Suppose you sit down on a truck and drive rattlety-bang over the tombstones of an old abandoned cemetery. The first time, I made the journey with Paco, a friend of mine who kept an inn, and we went in his cabriolet. Three or four miles out one of the springs snapped and we did the rest of the way sitting on a toboggan slide. It was a voyage of exploration and Paco was the proper person to take along for several reasons. In the first place, he was sure to know everybody (he knows nearly everybody wherever he goes, and the rest he swears he has met before) and everybody was sure to be a friend; then again biliousness hung its very head for shame in his company, for although abominably poor and head over heels in debt, he was always singing *coplas* and firing out jokes that made you laugh, they were so infernally bad; and once again he could drink more *aguardiente* without showing it than anybody I ever knew, and I am rather of the opinion of Warrington, who thought the man capable of drinking the most beer in all London not without interest. All Abanilla, of course, was glad to see us, from the mayor down, or up.

Business was suspended for the day and it was set 'em up, set 'em (hic) up (I threw mine on the floor when I could), and *bref*, there was a H.T. in the O.T. that day. The dirty old woman in the dirty posada got up a very good-tasting dinner for the band of us and as the wine skin went its round, I thought of Sancho Panza and was sorry he was unavoidably detained elsewhere. Afterward there was a cup of black coffee up at the little café and then a new wagon was lent us to go home in and they gave us the *despedida* with loud hurrahs and cries of "God be with you!"

Perhaps it was not strictly a Young Men's Christian Association picnic, but the trip was a howling success. Everybody enjoyed himself "*honrramente bien*," and there wasn't even one man jabbed with a knife.

Well, Abanilla rather pleased me, so I packed up my traps and started off there again, this time in a *carro*, under a broiling July sun, jammed in under a cloth awning between five fat women and sitting on a load of green onions that were talking awfully loud in the one hundred degree atmosphere. When you're in a steamer in a spanking gale there come times when the bottom drops away out from under you. In a *carro*, a two-wheeled, springless cart with the floor swinging from ropes, 'tis the same, only you go down after the bottom and meet it with a bang that tangles your intestines into knots and gives you appendicitis.

Under these circumstances it was difficult to get up much enthusiasm over the landscape. We left the fertile, irrigated *vega* of Orihuela and its palm trees, turned the sierra, and struck off into the *campo*, where water was scarce and the road ridged across every fifty feet or so to collect rainfalls. Up we went and down we went, bumpety, bumpety, thump, over stones and boulders, with a sun glaring out of a bleached sky.

Away off yonder across the flat plain was a sawed-out, jagged line of pale violet-blue mountains, and we knew that Abanilla lay among them, so on! on! through the chalky dust. No crops were anywhere in sight, but from time to time we passed through groves of ashy-gray-green olive trees, some of them vast enough, *haciendas* or *fincas*, the property of the Count of this or the Marquis of that, the only men who make any money in Spain nowadays except bull fighters. The

sierras that we were leaving behind us, the highest one of which was crowned by a big wooden cross set up by French Jesuits in other days, were bare, rugged, and fine in line, and beautiful in hot tones of orange and red purple. Five or six miles toward the east lay crouched the tremendous hewed-out mass of rock called the Sierra of Callosa, isolated in the vast plain like a Gibraltar in the sea; and still farther away, toward Albatera and Alicante, could be discerned three or four other smaller islets. Here and there in the olive groves were carob trees of a grateful dark green. Now please don't ask me whether it was the locust bean that grows on this tree that John the Baptist masticated and chewed, or not. If 'twas grasshoppers, 'twas grasshoppers. If 'twas locusts — well, they're probably not much worse than boarding-house steak. I've seen Spaniards picking the pods to pieces and getting considerable fun out of 'em.

By-and-by, after skirting the edge of a *rambla* (a sort of canyon or dry water-course), we came to a little village named Benferrí, where they were threshing out grain, for near by there was a spring turned to irrigating purposes, and crops of different sorts could be coaxed from the land.

A threshing scene in Spain differs radically from anything of the sort in America. Circles of ground out in the fields are rolled smooth and the sheaves piled up in big stacks around. Rude sun shelters for man and beast are erected — four poles stuck in the earth, with a roof of thatch lashed to them at the corners. When all is ready, men climb upon the stacks, cry *venga!* and toss the bundles to women and boys, who tug and drag them and lay them carefully out over the arena. And there is a deal of laughter and singing, I warrant you.

"Yes, but rather behind the times, ain't they?"

Oh, don't make me tired with the times! I'd rather ride around on a little sled and laugh and shout and sing as I beat out my grain than hustle it into the mouth of some ugly smoking thingumajig, coughing up my gizzard from the dust, even if I didn't gain time to loaf in the grocery at Snagville corners and spit at the stove.

Poor old Spain is getting pretty well singed just now. But she's better than she looks. I went there myself with a hereditary instinct that I ought to keep a revolver in my hip.

pocket and look out for snags. But when on the eve of my departure I took my enormous Smith & Wesson off my sagged-down belt, pulled the five cartridges out and threw it with a kerthump into my trunk, I realized with disgust that I hadn't been able to make a record even as a bad shot.

Without discussing the upper classes (who, *entre nous*, I don't believe are so very, very good in any land), but confining ourselves to farmers that the above threshing scene brings before us, I may say that no better people exist anywhere. Harder, tougher than nails are these Spanish peasants, full of cheerful patience and resignation that ought to procure them reserved seats in paradise. They labor like oxen under a tropical sun and laugh and sing over it, and there is not the slightest infinitesimal chance of ever laying by a goodly store for a rainy day. Is there meat for dinner?—and perhaps there is a small stew nearly every Sunday—well, hurrah for meat! Is there only a chunk of hard dry salt codfish? *Viva el bacalao!* Only rice? Good for rice! Nothing but bread? Well, we're pretty lucky to have bread, thanks to God! And the beggars coming a-strolling along in their never-ending string get their share, too. A stingy Spaniard was never seen—that is, a poor one.

Such thoughts as these came and went a-buzzing through my head, jounced out of me as I bumped along, viced in between five good-natured, chattering women in the onion atmosphere, and somehow or other we drew nearer and nearer to the mountains that had seemed so far off, and at last got to a steep hill where the wagon ruts dissolved away into marks worn in the solid rock, and we all got out and pushed the carro to the top. Abanilla lay down there below us, a cluster of houses and a church, at the base of a honeycombed hill, and we joggled into the town at dusk.

I was to put up with a respectable private family who took boarders when they could get them. It was an ordinary sort of two-story house—in the front a store where you could buy wine, *aguardiente*, sweet biscuits, ham, sausages, and cigarette paper; a half-dozen *cántaros* or water jars set in a wooden frame, and four big, red *tinajas* sunk and plastered into the corner, filled with wine or water.

The proprietress, a big, fat woman who tipped around like a toy figure with lead in the bottom, received me civilly and

took me up to a little room where I stored my traps. For supper I had a tomato omelet and a very good, though strong, wine to wash it down with. I remember when I was a wee little boy pledging myself never to drink, smoke, chew, or swear, and probably would have cheerfully promised never to go to Spain. Where is that pledge now? Doing duty as a paving stone in hades.

Abanilla dates from the Arabs. That is, I suppose it does, although I don't know anything about it. To find out about the Spanish past one must go to other countries and scour public libraries. At any rate, the oldest landmark in the town is a bit of Moorish castle wall and a cemented dungeon cut in the rock; a round hole served as inlet — it probably never had an outlet. These are at the summit of the hill around which Abanilla is built. We should be apt to wonder why under the sun the Arabs were asses enough to congregate in a desert waste like this, were it not for deep holes and caves cut in the *Peña Roja* near by, evidently abandoned mines. The story goes that the Moors unearthed rich stores of gold and silver from all these sierras round about. It may be so. It is true that they are veritable storehouses of iron, lead, sulphur, and ochre — with not a little silver and quicksilver, but no modern man has yet succeeded in discovering gold.

Peasants who go over to Oran to work in the vineyards relate conversations with the Moors; "Abanilla! Ah! rich, very rich! Hidden treasures! *Peña Roja!*" And there are mysterious stories of men coming and going in the night, but we all know them — they fill space in American newspapers with old dying Mexican and Indian accompaniments. But that there are hidden antiquities about all these Arab towns seems probable enough. I, myself, might tell of digging with pick-axe in likely-looking spots that gave out intriguing hollow sounds — but let that pass.

Talking of antiquities, I know a captain retired on half-pay who showed me a Phœnician water jar covered with barnacles and shells, pulled up with nets in the sea near Carthage, and two amphoras, the history of which he related in splendid, animated, windmill fashion. But when I spoke of this to a mutual friend, he just laughed his insides out. "What! that chap digging up amphoras! Well! what a liar! Why both of them were given to him, and as for

Phœnician jars, don't you know how they are made? They take a modern one and sink it with cords for a few months and it comes up looking as though it fell out of the ark." Ah! Phœnician jar, we all know where thou art to-day. Yellow gold was paid for thee and ages hence thy remains will be unearthed from the ashes of Troy (N. Y.).

DODGE MACKNIGHT.

ACTUALITIES IN SPAIN

Now when the yellow journals are blooming with fearfully and wonderfully made pictures of Spaniards (by the way, if an individual dressed after the fashion of our caricaturists were to be seen over there he would undoubtedly be taken for an American Pig and stabbed to death), and all the conversation hereabouts concentrates itself upon Dons and Dagos, would it be presumptuous for a poor, humble personage who has lived in Spain, not hustled through it in *étapes* from hotel to hotel, to join the universal talking match and get up a little side-show of his own? And first let me preface my remarks by saying that I have lived long enough in foreign lands to appreciate the Star-Spangled Banner, God bless her! In my button-hole breathes the bland request to just "Remember the Maine", and the very seat of my pantaloons is patched with Old Glory.

Well, the Spaniards are pretty good fellows after all in certain ways. To sum them up, I should say that they were a race of boys, easily amused and excited, incapable of taking a serious Anglo-Saxon view of life, generally generous among themselves and always extraordinarily so to strangers. The trouble is that without realizing it they are often cruel and barbarous, and that is just where the shoe pinches our feet. As in the case of your excellent neighbor who insists in practicing on the trombone when you want to go to sleep, you don't care if he is a deacon in the Methodist Sunday-school, your heart's desire is to make a doormat of him.

I don't pretend to understand the Spaniard thoroughly. My mental standpoint was not his. I could see pretty well through his spectacles, but a good many things looked blurred. Still I left many friends there of whom I think with affection.

Sometimes the mixture of generosity and cruelty led to such strange results that I used to lie awake nights trying to puzzle out the why and the wherefore, but I gave it up. When I get to paradise perhaps I shall have leisure to guess the answers — some, not all.

When I was in Murcia a couple of years ago, a certain woman was to be garroted. She had confessed to poisoning her husband deliberately for the purpose of ultimately marrying a lover. Well, wasn't there a hullabaloo in the old town! It was stirred to its innermost depths. Petitions by the yard were sent to Madrid. Prominent men called meetings. Deputies and senators vied with each other in using their influence for mercy. All to no purpose, and on the fatal day, spoken of in the local papers as a day of shame and ignominy for the noble city of Murcia (the word noble is invariably yanked in by the hair), inhabitants left there in trainfuls, while windows and balconies were covered with crape.

This is not so extraordinary—indeed, it seems praiseworthy and reasonable enough until we find that in the selfsame city, of some twenty-five or thirty thousand souls, there is an average of one cold-blooded murder per night on the street corner and no one makes much of a protest about it. It is relegated to some corner of the Murcia daily, and the assassins get off scot-free or receive sentences varying from one to twenty-five years imprisonment according to the amount of “pull” they have with the *caciqués* or local political leaders. A friend of mine who lived in an out-of-the-way city in the province—he held an important position in a large wholesale warehouse belonging to a provincial deputy—was called to Murcia on jury duty. Before starting he was politely requested to use his influence for the acquittal of a certain murderer, and there was a little hint thrown in that if he failed he would suddenly find himself out of a job. He was not lost to all sense of honor, for afterward he came around to see me and spattered the four walls of my room with Spanish swear words as he raged over the many ignominious “deals,” but—well, he has his job yet, and I daresay has forgotten all about the affair by now.

Do you naïvely imagine that in Spain voters go to the polls to put in their ballots freely for their preferred candidate? Hardly. Each man carefully weighs up the amount of damage that a candidate and his friends may be able to inflict upon his business, and if one in particular tips the scales, that one gets his vote; if the balance seems dangerously equal, he sagely hides till after election. This, after

all, is only one scene in the *zarzuela*, for I have known of elections in Madrid where the candidates of the party in power got more votes than there were voters in the entire precinct.

Dost think that in these stirring times of strife, rich and poor shoulder muskets together and fight for *la patria*? *Ca hombre, ca!* The *bourgeois* charitably get up theatricals and enthusiastically wave flags and sing the "*Marcha de Cádiz*", while poor wax-like devils already returned with arm in bandage and morgue countenance are generously given front seats in festooned loges, where at certain moments they are instructed to stand up and shout "*Viva España!*"

If we could only corral in the common people that work for their daily bread, principally peasants, send them to school, and give them a few square meals, while we knocked the lining out of the rest of Spain, this would be the most glorious war that ever took place. There is an old proud saying constantly quoted in the newspaper editorials about the "*reina de Castilla que cria á los hombres y los gasta*," or words to that effect — the kingdom of Castile that produces men and uses them up, by men of course meaning the populace. The "public be damned" isn't in it with this phrase.

I personally know nothing whatever about the Spanish aristocracy. I happened to be out when the Duke of Veraguas called to inquire if I wanted to buy a few bulls. I have seen the interiors of some of their country houses and found them inartistically furnished with useless gew-gaws and tinfoil bric-a-brac. Generally in one corner of the salon there was a thick foot-rug set around with chairs where the family evidently spent their winter evenings trying to keep warm in a palace without chimneys. The walls had once been crudely decorated in cheap distemper that had long since cracked off, and a number of old black oil paintings hanging about were only noticeable as being hand-made. The floors were in general agreeably and picturesquely put together with varnished tiles, forming a mosaic landscape with a white border. The entrances to these mansions were as a rule very fine, with round archways, under which crept long staircases, but there again plaster and walls had parted company, and if there were century-old wrought-iron railings and lanterns, noticeable gaps and broken glass showed that there were

evidently junk shops in Spain. I once visited a chateau belonging to a certain marquis and strolled through upward of fifty rooms, but all the souvenirs I have preserved of the place are associated with a fine flower garden full of big geraniums in flower and the black-eyed daughter of the *concierge*.

Perhaps I am too hard upon the aristocracy as a class. (They really must excuse me.) It seems to me that a man with a handle to his name ought to be able to pay himself a little culture and refinement. But make the mansions smaller and pull off a little more plaster, divide the number of paintings by two, mix in tissue-paper flowers and saints in glass cases, and there you have a *bourgeois* interior sure enough. I knew very few *bourgeois* intimately either; not that I couldn't, but I didn't want to. They failed to interest me. By *bourgeois* I mean a person who has an income anywhere down to three or four hundred dollars a year. For over there a man with that amount rarely if ever thinks of working. He can exist easily without stirring a hand, for he is a frugal eater, living on stews of vegetables and rice, with now and then a piece of meat thrown in. Wine is cheap if he cares to drink it, but water is generally enough for him. He kills his time by going to the café or *casino* at noon to drink his cup of black coffee and play dominoes, and at night you will usually find him seated at the gaming table playing *monte*. These *bourgeois* are not bad chaps to meet and talk with. They will insist in paying for your coffee, give you a cigar, talk and chat agreeably and lie most voluminously. But they are not of the slightest use in the world, and Spain would be infinitely better off by their absence. Their money is generally invested in land that they let out to peasants at good stiff prices, and they would no more risk a dollar in trying to build up industries or develop mines than give up their noonday coffee.

They have a superficial smattering of education picked up in Jesuit colleges, but are such a lazy and naïve and gullible class altogether that Spain has become a stamping ground for knaves and rascals from the four corners of the earth. And if they are exploited for a *peseta* or two they seem to bear no ill will, but rather admire the man capable of doing it.

I have said that they can exist easily enough on three

or four hundred a year, and so they can, but they don't always. Gaming often makes terrible breaches in their income and not seldom their capital goes to the bow-wows. Then love of dress plays the deuce with their dollars, and when the family is large — the rule rather than the exception — I guess after all they can't have pie for dinner every day, unless they get trusted for it. If my readers were to investigate the home life of a large majority of the well-dressed and elegant people seen in the *paseos* they would be considerably astonished. I penetrated into a good many of these interiors, for an acquaintance of mine was a buyer of antiquities and I liked to go on a hunt for old heirlooms and pictures and jewels and fans, even if I wasn't rich enough to acquire anything myself.

I found the families eager to sell all they had, and many were evidently getting down to hard pan, what from increased land taxes or recklessness or profligacy. But there was no question of going to work to stop up the gap. Loaf with honor was their motto.

Pretty bad all their old stuff was, utterly lacking in artistic qualities. Now and then something good would be pulled out of the rubbish heap, and then it was diamond cut diamond, perhaps for days, and arguments and dickering down to the last cent. But anything that was evidently not wanted they would dispose of at any price.

In this way an excellent friend of mine, an old notary with a passion for pictures, bought up cartloads of large, old oil paintings, frames and all, for anywhere from twenty-five cents to a dollar apiece. There was only one man in the world capable of adding to the badness of most of these pictures, and 'twas this notary. God bless him, he meant all right, and after all you can't spoil a bad egg anyway. He was the most abstemious man I ever met, never drinking anything but water, spending but a few cents a day for food, and smoking just two cigarettes every twenty-four hours. The rest of his income went for art. Every day I would find him in his little house, a microscopic palette on his thumb, engaged in restoring (as he said) and improving his gallery. But here's the rub! occasionally he acquired some really good pictures, of course being entirely unconscious of the fact. One, I especially remember, painted on copper, a Virgin of the Rosary with figures of saints and angels — evidently a

study by some old master for an ambitious painting. I tried by all manner and means of reasoning to get him to leave it alone, but if it had been signed "God" down in the corner he would have put in a few "added truths" just the same. At first he proposed to cover up small spots of copper where the paint had worn off, but once started death alone could have stopped him. The angels came out of the ordeal looking as though they had just finished a repast of huckleberry pie in some celestial cheap hash-house, and when he got through with the Virgin she was the rockiest damsel that ever burnt up lamp oil. Two other good pictures, Italian probably, he cleaned and soaked in a strong bath of lye to take off the dirt and varnish. They got restored all right — restored to their forefathers. Amongst other chef-d'oeuvres that he used to improve were bits of sketches by Dodge Macknight.

I presented him with the daily scrapings from my palette, and he dried them and carefully kept them in a box. He would take some study of a hut and put in interesting details of peasants and peasant's sweethearts and jackasses, and doves billing and cooing in the air, and bunches of ripe dates growing on any old sort of a tree. They only needed the name of some pre-Raphaelite affixed to make them exhaustively complete.

A man is known by the company he keeps, and so after a time I, too, was besieged by requests to buy this thing and that thing. As a sample, I may speak of an old hundred dollar bill, "from my country," signed Blank's hair vitalizer.

DODGE MACKNIGHT.

ABRIDGED HISTORY

- 1860 Born Oct. 1, Providence, R. I.
- 1876 Graduated — High School
- 1877 With scene painter
- 1878 Business in New Bedford, Mass.
- 1883 Dec. 26, sailed for Paris
- 1884 Cormon's Atelier — Moret in summer
- 1885 Cormon's Atelier — Auvergne, Montpezat, Aubenas, Fontvielle
- 1886 Cormon's Atelier — Cassis, Moret, Algeria
- 1887 Algeria, Cassis, Moret
- 1888 Moret, Fontvielle, Moret
- 1889 Moret, Port Hallan (Belle-Ile)
- 1890 Port Salio (Belle-Ile)
- 1891 Cosquet (Belle-Ile)
- 1892 Spain, married June 20th, Orihuela
- 1893 Spain, Orihuela
- 1894 Monthyon in spring, then to Valserres
- 1895 Valserres, Le Puy
- 1896 Spain (Orihuela)
- 1897 Spain Oct. America — Greenfield, Mass.
- 1898 Spring to Mystic, Conn.
- 1899 Mystic
- 1900 Spring to Sandwich, Mass.
- 1901 Sandwich
- 1902 Sandwich
- 1903 Sandwich
- 1904 Sandwich — May to Nov. Spain, Ronda, Granada, Sierra Nevada,
Orihuela
- 1905 Sandwich — Grand Manan
- 1906 Sandwich — Jamaica 6 weeks — Newfoundland (Torbay)
- 1907 Sandwich — Mexico-(Cordoba)
- 1908 Sandwich — White Mts., Mexico (Cautla)
- 1909 Sandwich — White Mts., Summer to Newfoundland (Flat-Rock)
White Mts. 4 mos.
- 1910 Sandwich — White Mts.
- 1911 Sandwich — Mexico (Coatepec), White Mts.
- 1912 Sandwich — White Mts.
- 1913 Sandwich — Utah (Zion Canyon), White Mts.
- 1914 Sandwich — Grand Canyon, Colorado, White Mts.
- 1915 Sandwich — Grand Canyon (Northerly rim), White Mts.
- 1916 Sandwich — Nearly all the year

Painting Trips. Many years in France, three times to Spain, once to Algeria. Three times to Mexico, twice to Newfoundland, once to Grand Manan, once to Jamaica, twice to Grand Canyon, once to Utah. Many times to Shelburne, N. H.

EXHIBITIONS HELD AT THE GALLERIES OF MESSRS. DOLL
AND RICHARDS, BOSTON

No.	Year	Duration	Pictures	Subjects
1	1888	Jan. 28-Feb. 9	35	Algerian-French
2	1889	March 21-April 3	30	French
3	1890	March 22-April 2	30	Belle-Ile
4	1891	March 6-18	30	Belle-Ile
5	1892	Feb. 26-March 9	30	Belle-Ile
6	1897	March 19-31	30	Spanish
7	1899	Feb. 3-15	30	Spanish, Alps, Mystic
8	1900	March 9-21	30	Mystic
9	1901	March 8-20	30	Cape Cod
10	1902	March 21-April 3	31	Cape Cod
11	1903	April 3-15	30	Cape Cod
12	1904	April 1-13	29	Cape Cod
13	1905	March 24-April 5	30	Spanish
14	1906	April 26-May 8	30	Grand Manan, Jamaica, Cape Cod
15	1908	March 12-24	30	Newfoundland, Mexico, Cape Cod
16	1909	March 5-17	30	Newfoundland, White Mts., Cape Cod
17	1910	April 15-27	30	White Mts., Miscellaneous, Cape Cod
18	1911	April 7-19	29	White Mts., Miscellaneous, Cape Cod
19	1913	March 21-	28	White Mts., Mexico, Cape Cod
20	1914	March 27-	30	White Mts., Utah, Cape Cod
21	1915	March 25	32	White Mts., Great Canyon, Cape Cod
22	1916	March 17-	30	White Mts., Grand Canyon, Mexican
23	1917	March 16-	30	Newfoundland 4, Mexico 5, Cape Cod 11, White Mts. 10

SAINT BOTOLPH CLUB, BOSTON

Year	Duration	Pictures	Subjects
1894	Jan. 1-20	58	Spanish
1907	Feb. 28-March 23	50	Newfoundland-Miscellaneous
1912	March 25-April 5	46	Mexico, White Mts., Miscellaneous

NEW BEDFORD, MASS. (H. S. Hutchison & Co.)

Year	Duration	Pictures	Subjects
1898	Feb. 18-March 1	12	French, Spanish
1902	Jan. 22-28	8	Cape Cod

NEW ORLEANS, LA. (Fiske Library Gallery)

1893	Feb. 24-March 3	35	Miscellaneous
1899	Dec. 15-23	5	Miscellaneous

HAMPTON COLLEGE

1893	Nov. 28-Dec. 6	37	Miscellaneous
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BLACK AND WHITE CLUB, PLYMOUTH

1902	Oct. 1-7	30	Miscellaneous
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LONDON, ENGLAND (John S. Sargent's Studio)

1890		30	Belle-Ile
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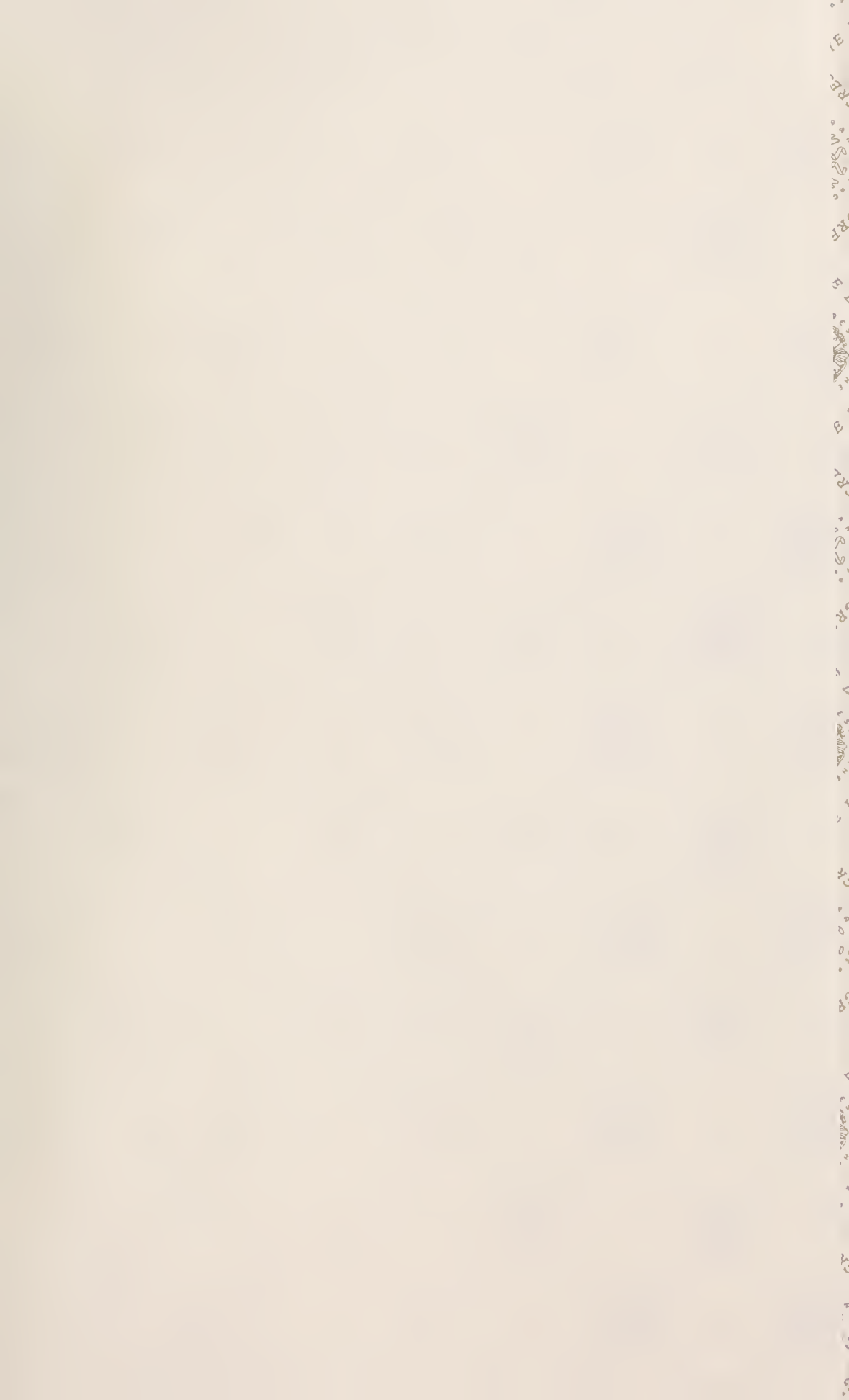
TWENTIETH CENTURY CLUB, BOSTON

1907	Nov. 26-Dec. 13	50	Grand-Manan — Cape Cod
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MRS. HENRY WHITMAN STUDIO,
56 Mt. Vernon St., Boston, Mass.

1895	Oct. 1-7	30	Belle Ile, French Alps
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